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ABSTRACT

This study surveyed the teaching practices of instructors of grade six language arts in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Teacher characteristics of (sex, number of university courses in language arts, length of teaching experience, and number of language arts inservice courses) were correlated with the frequency of use of selected teaching practices. One hundred eighty teachers completed an original survey instrument designed by the author. Items were grouped in the following content areas: creativity-creative writing, functional writing, grammar and usage, handwriting, listening, speaking, spelling, and vocabulary. The most frequently used teaching practices were product-oriented, traditionally validated methods. Least-used practices were those that tap newer, more process-oriented aspects of communication. Analysis of demographic data revealed few significant differences in teaching practices as related to teacher characteristics, except as a function of sex and of number of university courses in language arts and in related areas. (Author/KS)

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

AN ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHING PRACTICES IN GRADE SIX

by

DOLORES ELAINE MacNAUGHTON

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to survey the teaching practices in the language arts of teachers at the grade six level. The study was designed to investigate: (1) the frequency of use by teachers at the grade six level of selected language arts teaching practices, and (2) significant differences in frequency of use of selected language teaching practices in terms of four teacher characteristics. These characteristics were: (1) sex, (2) varying numbers of university courses in language arts and related areas, (3) length of teaching experience, and (4) varying numbers of language arts in-service courses.

A 40-item survey instrument was developed by the investigator to gather necessary data. Copies of this instrument were mailed to the principals of all Calgary public elementary schools to be distributed to those teachers currently teaching at least one class of grade six (levels 13 and 14) language arts. Usable returns were received from 180 teachers.

A percentage distribution was calculated to determine the frequency of use by teachers of each of the language arts teaching practices. Four null hypotheses were tested for significant differences between frequency of use of teaching practices and four selected teacher characteristics. Chi square was used in all tests of significance.

The demographic data revealed that more than three-quarters of the teachers surveyed had one or no courses in language arts curriculum and just under three-quarters had one or no courses in reading curriculum. Approximately one-half of the teachers had no courses in English, and more than three-quarters had no courses in linguistics, creative dramatics,

or speech. Almost three-quarters of the respondents had taken no language arts in-service courses. More than two-thirds of the respondents had six or more years' teaching experience.

For purposes of additional clarity, the survey instrument items were grouped and discussed according to eight language arts areas: (1) creativity-creative writing, (2) functional writing, (3) grammar and usage, (4) handwriting, (5) listening, (6) speaking, (7) spelling, and (8) vocabulary. Analysis of the data in these areas revealed varying frequency of teacher use of the selected language arts practices at the grade six level. The most frequently-used language arts teaching practices were those traditionally validated approaches to teaching language arts. While many are useful, they are generally product-oriented and tap only a limited spectrum of communication. The least-used practices tended to tap the more recently suggested process-oriented aspects of communication.

Analysis of the data revealed few significant differences in teaching practices in terms of selected teacher characteristics. Significant differences were found on two survey items between language arts teaching practices and sex; on two survey items between practices and numbers of university courses in language arts and related areas; and on one between teacher use of practices and in-service courses in language arts. No significant difference was found between teaching practices and years of teaching experience. Since few of the items tended to discriminate, it was concluded that most teachers employed the same teaching strategies, irrespective of their sex, level of professional preparation, and number of years of teaching experience.

Because of the implications arising from this study, several suggestions for further research were presented.

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INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged by educators that the development of the ability to communicate effectively is essential for children who are expected to meet the demands of today's society. Communication involves proficiency in both the expressive and the receptive language skills, including such areas as speaking, listening, creative writing, and functional writing. Consideration of the interrelationships of all the aspects of the language arts in communication strongly suggests that the teaching of the skills of oral and written expression and reception be based on research findings in these areas.

The content and methodology of instruction in the language arts at the elementary grade levels has been the subject of considerable controversy. Even the term "language arts" has not always found general acceptance with educators. Traditionally, for example, the aspect of the school program concerned with language has been called "English," and many educators still prefer this term. Others favor "communication arts," while still others use English as a modifier and refer to the "English language arts" (Wilt, 1965).

Educators are generally agreed, however, that all of the language arts are interrelated. While many of the statements concerning these interrelationships are based on expert opinion, there is an increasing amount of research becoming available which points out these relationships (Cleland, 1964; DeVries, 1970; Ruddell, 1966). Many of these

studies have been made in an attempt to give instruction in the language arts a sense of direction and purpose. Although the nature of the findings points to a general body of content and methodology, there exists considerable disparity between the acceptance of these findings and their actual application in the classroom (Smith, 1972).

More than 40 years ago, for example, a study by Rankin (1928) revealed that, of the time people spent in communication, approximately 45 per cent was devoted to listening, 30 per cent to speaking, and the remainder to reading and writing. A 1950 survey to determine listening practices in elementary education indicated that students spent an average of 57.5 per cent of their classroom time in listening (Wilt, 1956). Nevertheless, a study by Brown (1967) which analyzed the content of American textbooks in language arts in terms of listening activities or listening instruction from 1959 to 1964, indicated that writing and grammar and review lessons were emphasized to such an extent that only .63 per cent of the 7,744 lessons emphasized instruction in listening. As Landry (1969) points out:

> Although research has consistently shown that pupils spend more time listening than in other language arts activity, a serious lack of programs which develop listening skills is evident in most elementary schools. (Landry, 1969, p. 599)

Following an investigation of 168 high school language arts programs in various parts of the United States, Squire (1965) concluded that there is a tremendous gap between what research suggests and what is practiced in the teaching of the language arts. Squire suggests that instruction needs updating if education in the language arts is to improve. Studies by Tovatt, DeVries, Miller, and Rice (1966) reinforced

Squire's point of view when findings revealed that secondary English teachers were relatively uninformed concerning research and professional writings in the field of language arts. As a result of a follow-up study concerned with language arts teaching at this level, DeVries (1967) further suggested that considerable confusion exists among secondary English teachers as to what to teach and when to teach it.

The gap that exists between research findings and classroom teaching at the elementary grade level is dramatically illustrated by Greene and Petty (1971) in their statement:

> The teaching of grammar in the elementary school has been the subject of much controversy for many years. The controversy has continued in spite of the accumulation of research evidence negating its value in improving oral and written expression and the failure by its advocates to establish other valid reasons for teaching it to the exclusion of other subject matter. (Greene and Petty, 1971, p. 371)

As early as 1906, Hoyt reported that students in the seventh and eighth grades with no training in formal grammar did as effective work in writing compositions or in interpreting literature as did those with two years' drill on formal grammar. Research results through the years confirm Hoyt's findings. Nevertheless, traditional grammar is still taught in many elementary schools and formal grammar drills can be found in many textbooks currently in use in North American schools.

Another language arts area in which research findings appear to be out of tune with classroom practices is that of handwriting. As Plattor (1965) notes, "misconceptions concerning the most effective selection of content and methods may result in dogmatic conclusions that have little basis in fact" (Plattor, 1965, p. 14).

A continuing controversy in handwriting instruction is concerned with the prevailing custom in North American schools of teaching two

handwriting styles, manuscript and cursive. Groff (1960) suggests that there is no point to changing children from manuscript to cursive form and that reasons given for changing are largely opinions rather than facts derived from research investigations.

The following statement summarizes the problem inherent in the gap between research findings and classroom practices: ". . . tradition, regardless of whether it is based on any real evidence or not, is certainly a major controlling factor in all that is done in schools and cannot be minimized" (Greene and Petty, 1971, p. 450).

As Welsh (1966) points out, although there has been a tremendous amount of excellent research performed in the field of education over the last few years, the basic problem appears to be how to put this new knowledge into practice in educational systems. One appropriate starting point for developing ways of dissemination and implementation of research findings would appear to be to determine the teaching practices that currently exist in a given school system. In order for instructional continuity to be maintained, it would also appear essential to provide information to secondary school teachers about current practices in language arts instruction at the upper elementary grade levels. Information should also be useful to both elementary and secondary teachers concerning the extent to which current language arts teaching practices are in fact based on the results of research studies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study was designed to investigate the teaching practices in the language arts of teachers at the grade six level. Specifically, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the frequency of use by teachers at the grade six level of selected classroom language arts teaching practices?
2. Are there significant differences in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices in terms of selected teacher characteristics?

To answer the second question, four null hypotheses were investigated in this study:

H_o1: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices between male and female teachers.

H_o2: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying numbers of university courses in language arts and related areas.

H_o3: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying years of teaching experience.

H_o4: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying numbers of in-service courses in language arts.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

According to official figures from the Indiana State Department of Education reported in the National Council of Teachers of English Study (Squire, 1965), grade six elementary teachers spent 42.5 per cent of their instructional time in the teaching of language arts. An intensive review of the literature reveals no comparable current studies

of language arts instructional practices at this level in Canadian schools. However, writers of professional texts and curriculum guides (Anderson, 1972; Jenkins, 1971; J. Smith, 1972) indicate that at least this amount of time is currently spent in language arts instruction at the grade six level.

This study at the grade six level can provide both elementary and secondary language arts teachers, supervisors and administrators, as well as the general public, with information concerning teaching practices in the language arts at the upper elementary level. This study can also reveal the effect which research in the language arts has had upon instruction in the expressive and receptive language areas. The findings of this study should be useful in familiarizing teachers with research and professional information in the field of language arts. Since each of the areas of language arts has been dealt with separately in this study, teachers may also become acquainted with those areas in which there is a particular interest or need for information.

A continuing concern among educators involves determining and developing appropriate criteria for teacher evaluation. A possible strategy for the evaluation of language arts teachers may be suggested by those teaching practices found to be supported by research findings.

An effective language arts teacher should acquire a thorough understanding of the principles contained in the language arts program of the grade before and after the grade which he is teaching (Alberta, 1959). As this study is concerned with the upper elementary level, the findings may be useful as a frame of reference for organizing and evaluating the developmental principles of the language arts program

at the secondary school level.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The subjects involved in this study were limited to grade six teachers employed in the elementary schools of Calgary School District No. 19, Calgary, Alberta.

The items on the rating scale developed by the investigator for this study, "An Analysis of Selected Language Arts Teaching Practices in Grade Six," were selected from a wide variety of professional literature in the field of language arts. However, the number and content of items may not have sufficiently sampled all of the aspects of the language arts program.

Although reading instruction is an integral part of an interrelated language arts program, reading has not been included in this study as the area is of sufficient magnitude to warrant a separate study.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The following terms were used in this study:

Grade Six Language Arts Teacher

A grade six language arts teacher was defined as any teacher who instructs at least one class of grade six (levels 13 and 14) language arts.

Language Arts

The term "language arts" was defined as inclusive of the three general communication areas of speaking, listening, and writing (Alberta,

1959; Manitoba, 1968; Smith, 1972). More specifically, these three general areas include: (1) speaking, the expression of information and ideas through oral language symbols; (2) listening, the reception of information and ideas through oral language symbols; and (3) writing, the expression of information and ideas through graphic language symbols, including the areas of creative writing, functional writing, grammar and usage, handwriting, spelling, and vocabulary.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The first chapter contains a discussion and statement of the problem, its importance, the limitations of the study, definition of terms, and organization of the thesis. A review of the related research and literature is presented in the second chapter. The third chapter outlines the design of the study in terms of subjects, development of the survey instrument, administration of the survey instrument, and analysis of the data. The fourth chapter includes the results and interpretation of data. The conclusions and implications are found in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the importance of language arts in elementary education. With this interest has come an awareness that many of the language arts teaching practices at the elementary level, which research has indicated as desirable, are not necessarily in practice in our educational systems (Elin, 1972; Jenkins, 1971; Smith, 1972). Studies at levels other than elementary have revealed similar findings, and have contributed to the body of expert opinion regarding the teaching of the language arts.

Wherever possible, the most recent sources have been quoted. In addition, studies which appear to require extension or replication in order to obtain up-to-date results have also been included where appropriate.

A rating scale designed by the investigator for use in this study, "An Analysis of Language Arts Teaching Practices in Grade Six," was used to determine the teaching practices in language arts at the grade six level. Each item was based upon related expert opinion and research results. For purposes of the following discussion, the literature will be reviewed in terms of specific items in the areas of creativity-creative writing, functional writing, grammar and usage, handwriting, listening, speaking, spelling, and vocabulary. Wherever possible, related items have been grouped for purposes of clarity.

CREATIVITY-CREATIVE WRITING

Research studies by Getzels and Jackson (1958) and Torrance (1959) revealed that education can play an important role in the development of students' creativity. As Torrance (1963) notes, creativity may be defined in terms of a process, a product, a personality, or an environmental condition. He chooses to define creativity as the process of sensing problems or gaps in information, forming ideas or hypotheses, testing and modifying these hypotheses, and communicating the results (Torrance, 1963, p. 4).

Guilford (1959), a leading authority in the field of creativity research, was the first to use the term "divergent thinking" as a necessary component of creativity. According to Guilford, creative thinking is distinguished by the fact that there is something novel about it. Research by Parnes (1963) reinforced these points of view by demonstrating that a considerable part of creative behavior is learned through such tasks as creative problem-solving and creative writing.

The suggestion was made by Parke (1960) that children learn to write by writing and that emphasis should be on originality of style and content. In addition, he notes that, as the ability to write grows, so does the desire to write. In order to foster this desire to write, several goals for the teacher are suggested by Larson (1971): to help students develop fluency and confidence in the use of language; to encourage students to develop powers of exact observation; and to stimulate students to exercise their imaginations.

As early as 1957, Strickland suggested that a relaxed, happy

emotional and social climate in the classroom, as well as flexibility and freedom from pressures, were requisites for creative expression. In addition to these requisites, Larson (1971) views encouragement by the teacher as an essential ingredient in stimulating creative writing:

> . . . encouragement of the student's writing gives pleasure, pleasure stimulates the willingness to write; the willingness to write helps develop fluency in writing; fluency is expected to assure that the student will be able and willing to practice precise observations, fresh verbal presentations, and revealing comparisons--all of which are considered to be important abilities for the elementary student to develop in their creative writing. (Larson, 1971, p. 927)

As everyone possesses to some degree the ability involved in being creative (Torrance, 1963), educationists should be warned against turning out stereotyped individuals rather than individuals who are freely original and creative thinkers. Martin (1968) stresses the importance of developing the imagination as a necessary component for creative writing. Unfortunately, he notes, the fresh imagination that "runs joyfully rampant through childhood" (p. 611), gradually slows to a crawl as the years pass--perhaps from too much rote learning, too much reliance on routine, and too much organization.

Practice No. 14. Use audiovisual aids to provide background experiences for use in creative writing.

Since students appear to respond best to varying modes, it is important to use visual, auditory, and kinesthetic stimuli rather than just visual exposure to stimulate students to write (Turner, 1970). This point of view was suggested earlier by Lewis (1967) following the observation of classroom experiences with audiovisual aids. She commented that children of any background, given appropriate sound-picture stimuli, can think with vividness and individuality, discover

new ideas, and find words to express them.

Edmund (1956) used television programs and motion pictures as a stimulus for creative writing in a study involving 90 seventh graders. He concluded that the students who drew their ideas from these "derived" experiences wrote more creatively.

Pictures, literature and toys were used by Carlson (1960) to stimulate upper elementary children to write. She provided the experimental group with these stimuli while the control group was given only a title as the motivator. An analysis of the creative writing revealed a statistically significant difference favoring the experimental group in originality, versatility of vocabulary, and total number of words.

Tovatt (1966) and a staff of researchers devised a three-year study to determine the effects of using oral-aural-visual procedures in teaching written composition to junior and senior high school students. According to the investigators, the program recognized the fact that talking comes naturally for students, while writing does not. Tape recorders were used by the students so they could "hear" their ideas, develop them, and then write them. Based on their results, the researchers concluded that, because the student feels more confident and adept as a speaker, more ideas evolve which can then be expanded on in his writing. A marked difference in the attitude of students was also noted, as almost 90 per cent said they enjoyed the speaking and writing activities.

DeVries (1970) replicated this study with students in grades five to eight. His findings were similar to those of the secondary study, as were his conclusions. In another study, Golub (1970) compared

the differences in the creative writing of upper elementary students who used pictorial stimuli which varied in terms of color, complexity, and content subject. The findings indicated that concrete pictures were better stimuli than abstract pictures, and that black and white pictures as well as uncluttered ones resulted in more descriptive language. Based on these results, he suggested that perhaps the complexity and quality of writing can be influenced by the judicious selection of the type of pictorial stimuli.

Practice No. 9. Take your students on walks and field trips and provide opportunities for creative writing about these experiences.

The importance of multisensory learning through such activities as field trips was recognized by Hunt (1961), who suggested that multisensory experiences are necessary if subsequent intellectual activities such as creative writing are to evolve. In a comprehensive list of selected objectives in language arts from pre-kindergarten to grade 12, Endres, Lamb and Lazarus (1969) reinforce the importance of multisensory experiences for students of all ages as an integral part of their language arts program.

Although a review of the literature does not reveal specific studies which used walks and field trips to provide background experiences for creative writing, writers of professional texts and articles appear to be in almost total agreement on the importance of such activities. Applegate (1955) suggests that creative writing does not happen without enriching experiences, because no one is able to create out of a vacuum. She notes that, "if you want your children to write, you must take plenty of time to appreciate the little things that happen every day since this

adds to their realm of experiences" (Applegate, 1954, p. 17). Heathcote (1970), writing in the area of creative drama, also suggests that learning situations such as excursions, hikes and field trips arrest the students' attention and therefore promote awareness which provides the necessary stimuli and ideas for writing.

Practice No. 21. Provide opportunity for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisational activities free from adult suggestion.

Again, a review of the literature reveals that the suggestions noted below are based on observation and expert opinion rather than on the results of specific research studies. For example, Spolin's (1963) work with students led to her conclusion that creating a situation imaginatively and playing a role in it can be a tremendous experience as it is a sort of vacation from one's everyday self and the routine of everyday living. Because of this feeling of personal freedom, creative expression becomes more evident. Kelley (1964) notes that if children are given the freedom and encouragement to express themselves and are stimulated to give an imaginative interpretation to life, they are often challenged to write. Siks (1964) reinforces this point of view in her observation that children possess an innate freedom of imagination which can be channelled into creative response by the utilization of creative dramatics.

The importance of providing opportunities for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisation is emphasized by Way (1967). He notes that, because participation does not depend on such skills as reading or remembering lines, children of every age group and ability level are able to enjoy and work through the activities. Side (1969) notes that

participation in creative dramatics enables students to become more aware, and more capable of using concentration, imagination, the senses, the voice, emotions, and intellect.

Practice No. 26. Use spontaneous forms of story-telling with your students, e.g., chain stories, tell ending of story, etc.

The importance of encouraging speaking activities is emphasized by Niemann (1971) in this statement: ". . . the child who learns to speak well can learn to write well if at first emphasis is placed on ideas" (p. 817).

Studies by Hughes (1953), Loban (1963), and Ruddell (1965) indicated that oral language development serves as the underlying base for the development of reading and writing achievement. The importance of understanding the contribution of oral language to the development of other communication skills is further emphasized by Ruddell (1966) when he urges that one of the major purposes in the language arts program in the elementary school should be the development of each child's ability to utilize his skill in oral expression.

As the ability to focus on a major point may relate to the stimulus given, the use of chain stories and telling the ending of a story may provide the focus which is necessary for organizing a response (Strauss and Schatzman, 1960). A study by Delawter and Eash (1966) used unfinished stories as a stimulus to encourage elementary children to respond freely. The stories used presented a conflict situation between adults and children for which the subjects were asked to provide an ending. During taped interviews between the children and the investigators, certain precautions were observed: a familiar school

setting was used, and initial curiosity about the tape recorder was satisfied through discussion. The results of the study indicated that using the unfinished story encouraged an uninterrupted flow of speech which the researchers suggested may have been the result of the story acting as a definite focus for the reply.

Practice No. 34. Teach a variety of poetry forms such as haiku, cinquain, tanka, free verse, etc.

Exposing children to a variety of poetry forms often motivates creative poetic expression based on individual experiences and emotions (Scofield, 1961). In discussing the benefits of teaching poetry, Endres (1963) suggests that through the imagery of poetry, students can come to view life, as poetry so often deals with basic facets of man's experiences. Poetic language, concepts and abstractions allow the imagination to grow, often resulting in a student becoming more involved in the understanding of human emotions, feelings and thought. Squire and Applebee (1966) advised that the writing of poetry helps give students a unique understanding of literary forms and styles which expands their breadth of interest.

A study by Groff (1962), in which he analyzed the poetry written by 385 girls and 155 boys in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, indicated that, of the 540 poems written, 170 contained figures of speech. Groff concluded that more emphasis should be given to the teaching of figurative language in the intermediate grades.

Such poetry forms as cinquain, tanka, haiku and free verse lend themselves to the application of using figures of speech and also direct the student away from preoccupation with rhyming and toward a concern with the thought (Greene and Petty, 1971).

Among guidelines for teaching poetry, Cameron and Plattor (1971) suggest that teachers allow students to read and listen to poetry in which rhyme, rhythm and stanza form are irregular or omitted altogether --tanka, haiku, cinquain, etc. They comment that undue emphasis on the use of rhyme or regular rhythm in student poetry may well inhibit significant, spontaneous poetic expression. Further, the need to rhyme may prevent the student from using the word he really wants and distort his efforts to establish a regular metrical pattern in the natural flow of language (Cameron and Plattor, 1971, pp. 33-34).

Practice No. 39. Display student creative work in the classroom.

The effect of praise and blame upon 105 fourth graders' quantity and quality of creative writing, as well as upon their attitudes, was surveyed in a study by Taylor and Hoedt (1966). Results supported the assumption that praise without correction was superior to blame, as the praised group did significantly more creative writing, exhibited more favorable attitudes and were more highly motivated than those subjected to blame and correction.

The teacher may give praise and encouragement by displaying student work on the bulletin board where other students can read it (Tiedt, 1967). As the classroom is the student's "home" for nearly half his waking hours, such a factor as displaying student work can make an important contribution toward establishing an inviting environment (Fessenden et al., 1968). The display of student creative work can also result in the revelation of the child to his teacher and peers as they can get to know and understand him better by reading his work (Greene and Petty, 1971).

Herman (1970) emphasized that creative writing is worthy of public display because children are proud of any product they create. If they wish to exhibit their work, teachers should not rob children of the personal recognition they receive when they and others view their displayed products of creativity. He comments that many teachers never display on the bulletin board a child's creative writing that contains misspellings or other errors of English usage and mechanics, as they think erroneously that the work is a negative reflection on their teaching ability. He suggests that actually:

> . . . it mirrors a teacher's ability to build the kind of classroom climate that frees children from inhibitions so that they will use words which are part of their vocabulary but which they can't spell . . . so that they will be more enthusiastic in starting ideas than in the style in which they state them . . . so that they will be more inclined to reveal their secretive motives, desires, and insights in writing than in strict attention to paper margins. (Herman, 1970, p. 36).

FUNCTIONAL WRITING

There are basically two kinds of writing that children at the elementary grade level do in school. One form of writing is personal writing which most professional authors tend to call "creative" writing. The other is usually labeled "functional," and consists of the kinds of practical writing which exemplify correctness in style, grammar, usage, and mechanics (Herman, 1970).

Larson (1971) stresses the fact that functional writing instruction should be related to those skills which students need in their writing. This concept is not new, as more than 25 years ago Smith (1944) suggested that if students see the need for writing skills they will be more likely to learn.

The importance of learning writing skills is illustrated by the

needs for writing found by one child in a single day in a grade five class. Among these were:

> Record the weather conditions on a chart.
> Take notes from two reference books for a report in social studies on lighting in colonial times.
> List the characters and the properties needed for the dramatization of a story.
> Outline the main ideas found in a science article on the invention of the electric light bulb. (Using Language, 1955, pp. 116-117)

Practice No. 4. Tabulate types of student punctuation and capitalization errors from their written work and use these as a basis for teaching and review.

Over the years, expert opinion has suggested that instruction in capitalization and punctuation should be based on student errors in these areas.

Two studies by Odom (1962, 1964) confirm this practice, but suggest that extensions are needed. Based on the results of the 1962 study, which involved students in grades four to seven, Odom suggested that test instruments also needed to be developed to diagnose difficulties with punctuation, but that practice should be given to students according to their individual needs.

Odom's 1964 study examined the writing of 1,818 intermediate grade-level students. The results revealed a definite degree of difficulty at various grade levels relative to each of the capitalization skills which appeared on the test. Based on these studies, Odom concluded that diagnostic testing of individual students is necessary to ensure that instruction in punctuation and capitalization is given where needed, otherwise teachers give needless practice in some skills and too early instruction in others.

It would appear from these data that diagnostic testing is necessary in addition to tabulating errors from student work in order to determine the corrective measures needed for individual instruction in capitalization and punctuation. However, these findings require additional research evidence for confirmation.

Practice No. 11. Have your students proof-read their written work.

A problem of concern to many teachers has been students' proof-reading skills. Educators (Anderson, 1972; Blough, Mackinnon, Robinson, and Wilson, 1968; Fletcher, 1967; Wolfe, 1963) have suggested that students be encouraged to proof-read their written work in order to examine what has been written in terms of selection of ideas or information, effectiveness of organization, clarity of expression, and courtesy to the readers. This latter category includes legibility of writing, correct spelling, necessary punctuation and acceptable usage.

The benefits of proof-reading include the student discovering that there has been an improvement in his writing (Strickland, 1960), and the student acquiring the tendency and ability to appraise his own work (Dawson, Zollinger and Elwell, 1963).

Several studies have been conducted in an attempt to determine the actual results of proof-reading. However, these studies have generally been concerned with detecting spelling errors through proof-reading. It should also be noted that these studies present conflicting conclusions.

A study by Tireman (1924) over 45 years ago concluded that proof-reading is an insufficient instructional device for determining spelling errors as students overlooked too many errors. Another study (Goss, 1959)

also concluded that specific instruction in proof-reading did not confer a clear advantage in students being able to detect their spelling errors. Frasch (1965) also attacked the same problem but concluded that the five weeks of instruction in proof-reading for spelling errors had a positive influence on the proof-reading ability of most of the grade six students. Two years later, a similar study on the importance of proof-reading for spelling errors at the grade six level was conducted by Personke and Knight (1967). They suggested that there is sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation of the effectiveness of specific instruction in proof-reading for spelling errors, as the boys who were taught proof-reading in spelling made significantly fewer errors than did those who did not receive the same instruction. Evidence for the girls was not conclusive.

A survey of the literature resulted in only one study of proof-reading for all types of errors. Lyman (1931) sought to determine the extent to which pupils in grades six to nine could be taught to discover and correct language errors in their own composition. This pattern included planning, writing a first draft, proof-reading and revision, and writing a final copy. He found that pupils could be taught to discover and correct three-fifths of their own errors.

Expert opinion suggests the value of proof-reading in developing and improving functional writing skills. Evidence from research studies as to the benefits of proof-reading is inconclusive.

Practice No. 17. Develop with your students skills in outlining.

Practice No. 22. Provide opportunities for your students to learn and use such research skills as footnoting.

Practice No. 28. Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such specific skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.

The importance of teaching specific functional writing skills has long been emphasized by educators (Smith, 1944; Blair, 1956; Pollock, 1967; Corcoran, 1970). Greene and Petty (1971) view the importance of learning research skills as a necessary aid to study and the planning of all types of oral and written expressional activities. The suggestion is made by Corcoran (1970) that if students can see the application of specific skills, they are usually more ready to learn. Thus the suggestion is made that skills should not be taught by using isolated exercises, but should be applied in practical writing situations.

It should be noted that although reasons for the importance of learning these skills have often been cited, there is a dearth of research evidence to determine which teaching methods would be most beneficial to instruction of these skills.

GRAMMAR AND USAGE

Perhaps grammar and usage are the areas of language arts in which the sharpest controversies have existed as to what to teach, how to teach, or even whether to teach! The term "grammar" is used in a variety of ways. According to Greene and Petty (1971), grammar is the description of the language, while usage is the way in which words and phrases are customarily used. These authors also include "dialect" in their discussion and define it as a "collection of usages" (including not only words and phrases but also pronunciations) characteristic of a certain individual or group (Greene and Petty, 1971, p. 318). For purposes of the following discussion, grammar will refer to the arrange-

ments and forms of words in sentences (Sartain, 1966). This differs from the general linguistic definition which specifies that grammar is a set of rules or a system that produces the sentences of a language (Jacobs and Rosenbaum, 1968). It should be noted that even linguists cannot agree upon a definition of grammar. To make matters even worse, usage is often defined synonymously with grammar. When this is the case, "grammar" is used to refer to the way language is spoken and written, and includes word choice, sentence construction, and even such areas as punctuation and capitalization (Francis, 1963).

No wonder, then, that language arts teachers have been confused in this area. They have been operating against a background of conflicting grammar and usage studies since 1890 when William James reported the results of psychology experiments showing that transfer effects in memory perception, reasoning, and other mental faculities were so slight as to discredit the claim of any kind of formal discipline study.

Because the teaching of formal grammar and usage has involved such a large percentage of student time over the years, a number of studies have been conducted to determine the effect of instruction in these areas. Early studies by Hoyt (1906) and Briggs (1913) indicated the failure of formal grammar to transfer to such identifiable language skills as interpreting, defining, or correcting errors. These results have been reinforced in studies over the past 40 years (Asker, 1923; Braddock, 1969; Fries, 1940; Kaulfers, 1945). Despite the fact that the evidence is clear that there is little or no transfer from instruction in grammar and usage to effective expressive and receptive skills, many language arts teachers continue to emphasize it as a part of the

language arts curriculum (Jenkins, 1971).

Of importance is the statement that:

> By the time children enter school they have acquired most of the grammatical constructions used by adults. Interestingly, this process of language acquisition has taken place without the benefit of formal instruction. (Funk and Triplett, 1972, p. 167)

It should also be emphasized that when a child is said to speak "ungrammatically," he is actually obeying a vast number of grammatical rules. Often a classroom teacher does not notice this but instead notices only the conflict and concludes that the child has no grammar at all. Perhaps the point is further stressed in this comment: "Normal speech obeys about five or six grammar rules per second; but a critic can seldom detect in a child's speech more than one conflict with standard grammar per ten seconds on the average" (Joos, 1964, p. 204).

Educators sometimes assume that getting a student to speak more "properly" automatically makes him more effective. Instead, the emphasis needs to be on assisting each learner to become all that he is capable of (Goodman, 1969). Teachers must realize that when we condemn a person's language, we condemn him. As Raspberry expresses it, "Condemned children are not learners" (Raspberry, 1970, p. 31).

Practice No. 3. After observation and practice in using appropriate parts of speech, formulate generalizations.

Practice No. 13. Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach.

Practice No. 24. Have your students identify the parts of speech in sets of illustrative sentences.

Practice No. 36. Without using the terminology of grammar, have your students work on sentence construction by a "thought" approach, e.g., give your students an

awkward sentence such as this: "The team made the touchdown during the first half that won the game." Show them how the meaning is clarified when the sentence is reworded, and have them work on illustrative sentences.

Lavatelli (1969) has admonished educators to remember that:

> The ability to learn language is so deeply rooted in man that children learn it even in the face of dramatic handicaps. The grammar that they acquire may not be the King's English . . . but their very mistakes reveal that they have acquired the rules. When a child says "footses" for "feet," he is revealing a knowledge of one of our rules of forming plurals; he is simply not aware of all the exceptions. (p. 368)

What children do need is help in making words do what they want them to do--namely, to express ideas clearly.

Research studies (Lavatelli, 1969; O'Donnell, 1964; Strom, 1961) related to grammar and usage indicated that giving students many opportunities under teacher guidance to express their own ideas and reactions results in greater improvement in speaking and writing than do such methods as grammar classification drill, diagramming, and memorizing rules. Strom (1961) concluded that direct methods of instruction focusing on more precise structuring of ideas in writing are more efficient in teaching sentence structure, usage, punctuation and other related language factors than are such approaches as drill, memorizing rules, filling in the blanks in workbook exercises, and diagramming.

Since the English language has changed greatly over the years, change should be considered natural. Language is a flexible instrument of communication. Schafer (1962) concluded that because it cannot be tied down by inflexible rules there are no absolute and permanent rules governing correctness in usage.

Harris (1962) investigated with 12-14-year-olds the relative usefulness of "formal grammar" and of a "direct method" of instruction in grammar and usage in impfoving writing. He based his research on frequent counts of grammatical errors in the actual writing done before and after a two-year period of instruction in five London schools. From his results, he concluded that there was a lack of an effective tie between a relatively high grammatical score and improvement in the measured qualities of the students' writing. He summarized the implications of his research with this statement: "It seems safer to infer that the study of English grammatical terminology had a negligible or even a relatively harmful effect upon the correctness of children's writing" (p. 291).

In a longitudinal study by Loban (1963), language used by children through their kindergarten and first six years of elementary school was collected. In the kindergarten year, there were 338 subjects and, in grade six, 237 subjects remained. Loban noted that one of the most significant features to emerge from his work was that formal instruction in grammar and usage seems to be an ineffective method of improving expression at this level of development. He concluded that elementary students need many opportunities to grapple with their own thoughts in situations where they have someone to whom they wish to communicate successfully.

White (1964) questioned the effects on writing of teaching structural and traditional grammar and of teaching no grammar. This question was the focus of a study which involved three average seventh-grade classes of students from mixed socioeconomic neighborhoods. The results indicated that, although the teaching of structural grammar

somewhat improved students' writing, there was no significant difference in writing between the group which studied traditional grammar and the group who spent the same amount of instructional time free-reading.

After conducting two studies of the relationship existing between knowledge of grammar, both traditional and structural, and skill in reading and in written composition, O'Donnell (1964) concluded that it is doubtful that mastery of either structural or traditional grammar will result in greater proficiency in reading and writing. Students must learn to think and form their own sentences, not analyze the sentences of others (Braddock, 1969).

In summary, there appears to be no research evidence to reinforce the direct teaching of formal grammar and usage. There further appears to be no evidence to suggest that students can learn to write more effectively by analyzing other people's errors. It would seem that the proficiency in grammar and usage is best achieved through focusing on the structuring of ideas in writing.

HANDWRITING

Often teachers ignore the subject of handwriting as it does not appear intellectually challenging (Yee and Personke, 1967). However, current professional advice (Plattor and Woestehoff, 1971; Funk and Triplett, 1972) is that instruction in handwriting must be an integral part of the elementary school program, for handwriting is the principal tool of written expression. Herrick (1961) expressed the professional opinion concerning the purpose of handwriting in this statement: "Handwriting is a tool subject which should become routine as quickly as possible in order that it may be used functionally by a person for

himself and others to read'" (p. 264). Educators would do well to remember that no one can use that which he has not learned; therefore, emphasis must be upon instruction in handwriting.

The question then arises: "How must handwriting be taught?" Part of the answer would appear to be that handwriting must be taught in separate learning sessions in order to build efficiency. Since handwriting is a motor skill, it should not be combined with other language arts areas, because generating thought and learning a motor skill actually contradict each other (Engstrom, 1969, p. 415). More specific instructional methods will be discussed later in relation to suggested handwriting practices.

> Much of the recent research in handwriting seems to be more interested in finding out what is being done or in telling people what they should be doing than in testing hypotheses or creating new ones. (Otto and Andersen, 1969, p. 577)

However, one recent three-year study by Turner (1970) suggested a new approach to handwriting. This study was designed to develop a program of instruction which emphasized the perception of letters and their formation. The experimental method incorporated principles of perceptual learning by using multisensory stimuli and verbalization of procedures to develop perception of handwriting. In general, children using this method were able to write with comparable or superior quality, with more correct formational procedures and with adequate speed to meet writing demands.

To determine the relationship that exists between the ability to read manuscript and cursive-style handwriting, Plattor and Woestehoff (1971) conducted a study among children at the first, third, and fifth grade levels. They found that a child who could read one form could read the other, and therefore question the instructional practice of

teaching a dual program in handwriting since the transition to cursive writing often creates unnecessary problems for many children.

Practice No. 1. Stress legibility as the most important criterion in assessing handwriting.

Practice No. 25. Stress fluency as a major objective in handwriting.

Based on an extensive review of the literature, Herrick (1961) suggested that the major purpose of teaching handwriting is the rapid and efficient development of a legible and comfortable tool for communication and self-expression.

To study the extent to which handwriting is used, Templin (1960) surveyed 454 adults regarding their weekly writing activity and concluded that handwriting legibility is important in both the business and social worlds.

Surveys of handwriting instruction (Harris, 1960; Herrick and Okada, 1963) showed substantial agreement that legibility is the fundamental objective of handwriting. Developing easily written handwriting is also considered an essential goal, as it is this fluency which enables an individual to adjust to the purpose of his writing. (Dawson et al., 1963).

Although the ultimate goal in handwriting is to develop legibility, sufficient ease and speed are necessary to keep pace with thought flow and note recording (Engstrom, 1968). Because of the increased stress on higher education, it becomes of greater consequence that students develop efficient note-taking skills which involve reasonably legible and fluent handwriting.

Practice No. 15. Teach left-handed students to slant their paper to the right to achieve the best slant in handwriting.

Although research has shown that handedness does not affect learning ability, the fact remains that it is a right-handed world; therefore, the 10 per cent of the school population who are left-handed need to receive instruction which can help them adjust to this situation and develop adequate handwriting skills (Engstrom, 1969). Earlier, Engstrom (1966) noted that the question of the most advantageous approach to writing for the left-handed person is one of the least understood problems in education. From the first mention of the problem of teaching left-handed writers (Zaner, 1915), there have been various studies and professional advice to encourage more efficient ways of teaching handwriting to left-handers. After observation and experimentation as a handwriting supervisor, Nystrom (1927) suggested the turning of the paper clockwise and using a leftward push for the forward slant strokes. A suggestion by Drummond (1957) was that the left-handed child will learn to write with greater ease, legibility, and speed under favorable conditions, and lists one of these as slanting the paper to the right. The most desirable handwriting procedure for left-handers recommended by Freeman (1954) stated that handwriting should involve downward strokes toward the body or nearly perpendicular to the edge of the desk.

One of the most comprehensive studies (Engstrom, 1962) which surveyed the relative efficiency of various approaches to writing with the left hand was conducted with students in grades five to eight. Engstrom noted that 15 different methods of positioning the paper were used by the left-handed students. Each of the observed methods of handwriting procedures was analyzed. The conclusion was that the

techniques which rated highest in legibility and fluency involved slanting the paper to the right and using an approximate 90° arm axis with paper ruling.

Practice No. 20. Teach students to reach a rate of speed in handwriting appropriate to grade six.

Surveys in goals of handwriting instruction (Harris, 1960; Owen, 1954) showed that speed of writing was considered the least important goal. Strickland (1957) suggests that the speed of an individual's handwriting is influenced by his health and energy as well as by the quality of eye-hand-mind coordination the student has been able to develop. She also notes that genuine purposes for handwriting should take care of the problem of speed since, in the final analysis, it is an individual matter.

Suggestions as to handwriting instruction (Anderson, 1972; Greene and Petty, 1971) do not state developing speed as a major objective in handwriting, and do not make mention of developing any "appropriate" rate of speed.

Although suggested average rate norms have been derived from children's writing (Freeman, 1954; Groff, 1961; Plattor, 1965), it would seem that, in general, children learn best when they progress at their own rate of speed (Engstrom, 1966).

Practice No. 31. Instruct your students in the physical factors of correct posture and movement as means to improve handwriting.

The handwriting position in general acceptance in practice and supported by research (Freeman, 1918; Meyers, 1954) is to use the pen or pencil as essentially an extension of the forearm, with the movement

combining vertical and side strokes to produce a moderately slanted letter formation. It is suggested that the body be in a position for the forearm to move freely without strain. Lists of handwriting objectives state developing correct posture as part of the handwriting program (Ediger, 1965; Language Arts, 1960; Logan and Logan, 1967).

Although all students should not be expected to write at the same rate, each child should write with a smoothness of movement as smoothness is related to fluency in handwriting.

Practice No. 40. Teach handwriting on an individual basis, giving corrective assistance.

Individual differences will call for special attention to some students who need corrective assistance. Unless the elementary school provides this instruction, often natural, legible handwriting skills will not be developed or maintained (Yee and Personke, 1967). Nevertheless, in a United States survey (Herrick and Okada, 1963) which examined the extent to which a planned program for diagnosis and remediation of handwriting difficulties was conducted in the schools, only 7 per cent of the respondents reported such a program.

Early studies by Cole (1941) in individualizing instruction for the correction of specific illegibilities demonstrated that the main cause of difficulty was due to illegibility of letter forms rather than factors of spacing, slant, or alignment. Utilizing techniques where pupils worked on only the letters that gave them trouble, she conducted two studies that argued strongly for the individualized technique. Laurentia (1959) developed an individualized program based mainly on diagnostic procedures, remedial work and motivation. The conclusions suggested that motivation was an important element in the instructional

program as it appeared that once the child was motivated, individual diagnostic and remedial instruction appeared beneficial.

More recent attempts (Engstrom, 1962; Larison, 1964) have been made to provide for individualized instruction in handwriting. Particular handwriting problems of individual children were noted and corrective assistance was given. The indications were that children learn to write best when instructional procedures were individualized and corrective assistance given when needed.

LISTENING

In a world in which the patterns for living are constantly changing, there is a great need for educators to be aware of the importance of listening. The results of studies since 1926 (Rankin, 1928; Wilt, 1950) have led to the conclusion that listening is the most frequently used language activity in elementary school. Burns (1961) found that students listen for approximately 158 minutes each school day. He stressed the point that this was more time than was spent for any other single activity in the curriculum.

There are three distinguishable stages involved in the act of receiving auditory communication: hearing, listening, and auding (Andersen, 1964). Hearing is used to designate the process by which speech sounds in the form of sound waves are received and modified by the ear. Listening refers to the process of identifying the sounds; recognizing sound sequences through auditory analysis; and the mental recognition and association of meaning. Auding is the term used to designate the process by which the continuous flow of words is translated into meaning. Auding involves indexing, making comparisons, noting

sequence, forming sensory impressions, interpreting, and appreciating. For purposes of this review of the literature, the term "listening" is used to refer to listening and auding as defined by Andersen (1964).

Traditionally, teachers have equated listening with hearing. They have assumed that what has been said has been heard and, consequently, has been understood. They have often thought that if a student has the ability to hear, he also has the ability to listen (Landry, 1969). However, such authorities in the field of listening as Hampleman (1958) suggest that a child must bring a combination of experience and intelligence to the listening situation.

> It is at this point, where intelligence must be applied to symbols, that listening is distinguished from mere hearing. It is here that we discover the focal point to attack in helping children to listen better. Children need to be assisted to use the proper techniques for applying intelligence to that which is heard. (Hampleman, 1958, p. 49)

Ayres (1971) comments that, if listening ability is to improve, education will have to assume a large portion of the responsibility for developing good listening skills. While it is to be hoped that the groundwork is laid at home, critical listening skills are not acquired accidentally or incidentally--they are taught (Ayres, 1971).

Hollingsworth (1968) suggests that if a teacher wishes to have an effective listening program in the elementary classroom, it should contain these basic characteristics: (1) direct instruction in listening skills, (2) reinforcement of good listening habits throughout the school day, (3) careful listening on the part of teachers, and (4) awareness of the world of sound (pp. 103-104).

A number of studies on listening (Fawcett, 1966; Lundsteen, 1966; Nichols, 1948; Trivette, 1961) have revealed the need for specific instruction in listening. Nevertheless, surveys have shown a serious

lack of available programs and materials which develop listening skills in the elementary schools (Brown, 1967; Landry, 1969). However, the momentous impact of listening competence in all our lives demands that educators place a greater emphasis upon this most important language arts skill (Elin, 1972).

Practice No. 2. Provide opportunities for meaningful listening, e.g., listening for details, sequence, critical evaluation, etc.

Practice No. 12. Provide opportunities for your students to listen to each other, e.g., round table discussion about personal experiences, hobbies, etc.

Practice No. 19. Use activities to make students aware of the importance of listening, e.g., keep a log of actual time spent listening in one day.

Practice No. 35. Stimulate students' sense of hearing (auditory acuity) by using exercises that make students more alert to sounds, e.g., listening to familiar sounds and writing "sound" words.

Because of the growing awareness that individuals do have potentiality for listening, researchers have investigated the nature of listening and the success with which listening skills can be learned. A major problem facing the researchers has been the lack of instruments with which to measure this skill. However, a number of studies have indicated that listening comprehension can be improved through direct instruction.

Since few studies presently test hypotheses as to the best instructional methods in teaching listening, the problem still facing educators is concerned with identifying the most appropriate of these. While experts in the field suggest such methods of instruction as direct,

indirect, integrated, and eclectic which the teacher may use in the classroom, textbooks give little more than suggestions that students ought to listen (Brown, 1967; Freshly and Rae, 1969).

Trivette (1961) conducted a study with six fifth-grade classes to determine whether definite training in listening for the main idea, for details, and to make inferences, affects the child's ability to listen for these specific purposes. The conclusion was that training proved effective for most of the students. Other investigations have revealed similar results.

An investigation of the differences between various intelligence factors of "good" and "bad" listeners and the relationship between intelligence factors and listening achievement was designed by Plessas (1963). The subjects of this investigation were students in 15 eighth grade classes. Plessas found that numerical reasoning, verbal concepts and language factors were substantially related to listening ability, with a marked correlation between listening ability and logical reasoning. It would appear from these results that activities designed to develop listening skills should also develop these aspects of intelligence.

A study involving 12 fifth and sixth grade classes was designed to explore critical listening abilities (Lundsteen, 1966). The control subjects followed the usual curriculum, while the experimental subjects were presented with instruction in critical listening activities. Measures of critical listening ability showed a significant difference in favor of the experimental group.

To determine the effects of teaching listening skills to fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students, Fawcett (1966) involved a population of 638 students. The students in the experimental group received instruction

in developing listening skills, while the control group did not. The results indicated that students who receive listening instruction showed significant improvement in listening ability. Fawcett, therefore, concluded that listening ability is a skill which can be improved through instruction. The study also indicated that boys and girls do not differ significantly in listening ability, and that reading comprehension is significantly related to listening ability.

While there is a lack of research information as to what materials to use and how to use them in teaching listening, a number of writers have commented on this aspect of instruction. Corcoran (1970) points out that teachers may take advantage of all the opportunities for listening which arise throughout the school day. These opportunities are to be found during periods of conversing, sharing, planning, discussing, reporting, solving problems and expressing creative thinking. Endres (1969) further suggests that, to enjoy listening, students should be made aware of sounds around them. These include such sounds as voices, songs of birds, musical instruments, and the rustle of leaves.

To listen for the main idea, Kegler (1956) suggests that students keep logs of their listening activities, since analysis of these logs can prove helpful in evaluating listening experiences. Resource books with activities in the teaching of listening (Russell and Russell, 1959; Wilt, 1957) also provide useful suggestions for the classroom teacher.

Practice No. 30. Use audiovisual aids (films, filmstrips, records and tapes) as a means of teaching listening.

Lists and annotated guides to audiovisual material available for the teaching of listening include information on films, filmstrips, records and tapes (Duker, 1965; Greene and Petty, 1971). These authors

suggest that such audiovisual materials can provide ear training, motivation for improving listening, and an opportunity for critical listening. Corcoran (1970) further comments that, because students have a ready access to media, conversation and discussion about radio and television programs can be useful in providing opportunities for students to listen to each other.

SPEAKING

Helping children to use speech effectively and confidently is essential because so much school work is done in face-to-face contacts. An individual's personal, social and vocational life is affected by his ability to use oral language (Niemann, 1971). Speech is also the tool for the development of mutual understanding and appreciation as it carries overtones of meaning which reveal mood, and invites mutual response and interchange of ideas (Fessenden et al., 1968).

As oral language is the foundation of the language arts program, Funk and Triplett (1972) suggest that classroom teachers should strive to become more sensitive to each child's need for extensive oral language development, and provide students with systematic instructions. In discussing the language arts curriculum, DeLawter and Eash (1966) claim that oral language teachers have leaned heavily upon the "improvement by accident" approach. Their conclusion is that the development of oral communication skills has been seriously neglected in relationship to the time spent in other areas of the language arts.

An analysis of 54 language arts textbooks (Brown, 1967) revealed that, although the texts explicitly stated that oral communication should be stressed; actual emphasis in the books as to methods of instruction

was very minimal. As a result, Brown concluded that "the elementary school teacher must look beyond the confines of printed materials for assistance in teaching oral communication" (p. 467). The teacher who understands the contribution of oral language to the development of other basic communication skills is better able to utilize the transfer potential present in the interrelatedness of all communication skills (Ruddell, 1966). It has also been suggested that progress is being made toward the goals of speech teaching when the child shows:

> . . . a growing awareness of both listener and speaker; an appreciation of the effects of oral language on oneself and others; a growing sensitivity to the influence of different purposes for communication on oral language activity; alertness to various clues and cues that are an integral part of oral communication; and growing effectiveness in discussion as shown by an increasing awareness of the importance of courtesy and relevance as well as the responsibility of knowing when to speak and when to listen. (Mackintosh, 1964, p. 12)

Several investigations have indicated the importance of developing oral language. Strickland's (1962) study was designed to determine the relationship between the use of oral language and oral reading interpretation at the grade six level. The results indicated a positive correlation. A longitudinal study by Loban (1963) concluded that competence in spoken language appears to be a necessary base for competence in reading. DeVries (1970) found that when a student achieves smooth and melodious speech, he has achieved the basis for good writing.

Because oral expression helps to clarify thought as well as to communicate it, educators should take every opportunity to provide oral language instruction (Strang, 1972).

Practice No. 5. Allow specific time periods for such spontaneous speech activities as conversation and discussion.

Broman (1969) suggests that teachers can improve the language

of children by providing a classroom atmosphere that allows for discussion and sharing through talk. In setting up such a learning situation, the teacher is encouraged to establish rules of conduct and provide guidance for helping students learn how to control themselves.

Other educators (Barnlund and Haiman, 1960; Potter and Andersen, 1963) have encouraged the development of conversation skills as a method of speech improvement, as well as a means of achieving and maintaining good human relations. Since there is no formal audience in spontaneous speech activities, self-consciousness is less of an inhibiting influence (Way, 1967).

Practice No. 8. Use informal dramatization activities to encourage creative speaking.

Side (1969) states that creative drama is an important phase of oral work as dialogue is one of the elements. Allen (1968) suggests that, in addition to encouraging creative speaking, dramatic activities provide students with acceptable outlets for their emotions. Opportunity is also provided to observe the response of people and to respond in turn. Allen also states that, because ideas and experiences are combined with emotional attitudes, students select words and phrases so that they can communicate feelings. All these processes help them express themselves orally in orderly, acceptable and creative ways. This point of view is supported by Way (1967) who feels that students' speech can become more creative as they learn how to think emotionally rather than just intellectually. Informal drama activities motivate students and give them a feeling of personal freedom which often allows them to speak more independently and creatively (Spolin, 1963).

Practice No. 23. Teach discussion skills and provide situations in which these skills may be utilized.

According to Kemp (1970), students do not automatically know how to use discussion skills, but need to be instructed in these skills and given opportunity to apply them. Discussion involves group process; therefore, a teacher who has an understanding of some of the elements of group process will be better able to instruct students in its use (Beauchamp, 1964; Gorman, 1969). Stressing one specific skill at a time and providing activities in which this can be utilized would appear to be a more effective teaching technique than stressing many discussion skills in one lesson (Fessenden et al., 1968). Further, providing situations for discussion often gives students opportunities for speaking which involve interaction and provide for constructive evaluation (Tiedt and Tiedt, 1967).

Practice No. 37. Have your students participate in such activities as buzz sessions and brainstorming.

An activity such as a buzz session provides opportunities for active involvement (Gorman, 1969). The use of the small group provides the kinds of interaction that encourage students to think and speak. In addition, embarrassment sometimes caused by an audience is removed.

Brainstorming involves generating an extensive number of ideas as solutions to a problem and suspending criticism or evaluation until later (Pfeiffer and Jones, 1971). This activity, developed by Osborn (1957) aims at stimulating the active imagination. The technique is designed to produce a multitude of ideas within a short period of time as the entire group works on the solution of a problem, the improvement of an object, or the exploration of a topic to suggest solutions,

changes or ideas (Phillips, 1966).

SPELLING

For over half a century, a great deal of effort has been expended on research in the area of spelling. The earlier research, however, lacked three elements that distinguish today's research: (1) the content and techniques of descriptive linguistics, (2) the benefits of computer-based data processing, and (3) the modern views of "structured learning" (Hanna, Hanna, Berquist, Hodges and Rudorf, 1966, p. 60).

According to Horn (1969), the ultimate goal in spelling instruction is to enable students to spell correctly the words needed both in and outside school, in their present student status and later as literate adults (Horn, 1969, p. 1283). To do this, the teacher is faced with the problem of which words to teach. Early studies (Chancellor, 1910; Ayres, 1913) resulted in lists of frequently occurring words in adult vocabulary. A more comprehensive list was compiled by Horn (1926) in A Basic Writing Vocabulary, which was composed of the 10,000 most frequently occurring words. A later study by Thorndike and Lorge (1944) resulted in 30,000 frequently occurring words. Since these studies were based on adult vocabulary, they did not indicate those words most used by children. The chief study of children's word usage (Rinsland, 1945) resulted in a list of children's basic vocabulary. To determine the extent to which changes occur in word usage, Hollingsworth (1965) compared words used in writing in the early 1960's and the list compiled by Horn in 1926. Of the 1,245 separate words compared, 1,023 were common to both lists.

In addition to the concern with change in word usage, another instructional problem involves the amount of overlay between the words needed by adults and children. An examination of data by Horn (1969) reported on adult writing vocabulary and the writing vocabulary of children indicated a considerable overlap. Thomas Horn compared the 2,999 highest frequency words of the Rinsland (1945) list with Horn's (1926) list of 10,000 words and Fitzgerald's (1951) list of 2,650 words. The conclusion was that a total of 2,392 words were common to all three lists.

A group study (Hanna et al., 1966) conducted at Stanford University investigated the consistency between phonemes and graphemes in over 17,000 words. A computer analysis showed that individual phonemes are represented by predictable grapheme options more than 80 per cent of the time when position and stress of syllables are taken into account. The second phase of the study directed the computer to spell from phonemic cues all 17,000 words in the selected sample on the basis of rules derived from the first analysis. The results were that 89.6 per cent of the individual phonemes were correctly spelled; however, only 49 per cent of the words in the sample were spelled correctly, 37.2 per cent were spelled with one error, 11.4 per cent with two errors, and 2.3 per cent with three or more errors. On the basis of these studies, the researchers concluded that the spelling phonemes of the American-English language are much more highly consistent than believed by previous researchers.

Hodges (1965) suggests that an effective program of spelling needs to consider three factors: (1) the subject matter involved, (2) the nature of the learner, and (3) the kinds of instructional

practices which can effectively help the student to acquire understandings of his language and to develop competencies in using it. To be a successful teacher of spelling, Blake (1970) suggests that teachers do the following: (1) acquire a clear understanding of definitions, terminology, and concepts used in spelling instruction, (2) realize that children learn to spell best by various methods, and (3) develop knowledge and understanding underlying the potential contribution of various instructional approaches. Other educators (Greene and Petty, 1971; Grothe, 1966; Horn and Otto, 1954) emphasize the importance of correct spelling and endeavoring to spell correctly. A study by Grothe (1966) which involved fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students, investigated the effects of a "spelling conscience" in a spelling program which included proof-reading, spelling lists, teacher-dictated story, pupil self-evaluation, and teaching ranking of academic conscience. Grothe concluded that the operation of a "spelling conscience" is dependent upon intellectual ability and academic achievement; and that "spelling conscience" is not maintained at a consistent level of operation.

Hanna and Hanna (1965) state that, because the English language is a living, changing, and expanding communication medium, educators must face three facts:

> (1) that there is no longer one single acceptable pronunciation for a given word; (2) the orthography very often does not conform to the speech habits of large numbers of people; and (3) there is little likelihood that English orthography will be altered to conform to each new change in pronunciation. (Hanna and Hanna, 1965, p. 758)

Therefore, teachers ought to be aware that pronouncing words for spelling purposes as nearly as possible in conformity to the orthography may be an aid to the student in his effort to relate phoneme to grapheme.

However, the teacher who attempts to insist that the student carry over his oral precision in writing words to speaking words will fight a losing battle.

Although a great deal of progress has been made in spelling research, a statement made by Foran (1934) over three decades ago is still an appropriate summation: "This does not imply that there are not problems awaiting solution. . . . further research is necessary even now to solve the many problems which remain in the teaching of spelling" (p. 2).

Practice No. 6. Use the "Test-Study" method when teaching spelling, e.g., pretest, study words misspelled, posttest.

A study by Horn (1919) indicated that children already know many words on spelling lists, and that 75 per cent of available instructional time would be wasted if children were obliged to study every one of the listed words.

In response to Horn's study, a large-scale attempt to assess the merits of the "Test-Study" plan (pretest, study words misspelled, posttest) and the "Study-Test" plan (study, test, study, retest) was made by Kilzer (1926). Upon completion of the study, Kilzer urged the adoption of the test-study method on the grounds of its superiority in immediate recall and its more economic use of time. Evidence resulting from research by Fitzgerald (1951) also favored the test-study plan as the most efficient and satisfactory approach to teaching specific words and achieving the objectives of the spelling program.

To compare the efficiency of the test-study and study-test methods in teaching spelling, Ledbetter (1959) randomly divided 498 second grade students into an experimental (test-study) group and a

control (study-test) group. All students worked with the same spelling lists and were instructed by the same teacher. The results of the study showed the test-study method to have a statistically significant advantage over the study-test method. Ledbetter also concluded that deficiencies in teacher supervision work to the disadvantage of the test-study method. Therefore, teachers should be involved in individualized supervision and instruction during the study periods.

Working with second and third graders in 27 schools, Reid and Hieronymus (1963) investigated the relative efficiency of five methods of teaching spelling. These involved: (1) test study method, (2) workbook method, (3) word perception method, with test, (4) word perception method, without test, and (5) proof-reading and correction method. Although Reid and Hieronymus were unable to find a truly decisive superiority of any one method, they did conclude that the test-study method and perception method (without test) appeared to have an advantage over all others. The workbook method and the proof-reading and correction method they found provided the poorest results.

Based on research evidence, the large majority of expert opinion suggests that the test-study method be used for the most efficient spelling instruction (Kuhn and Schroeder, 1971; Greene and Petty, 1971; Sherwin, 1969).

Practice No. 16. Have your students correct their own spelling tests.

Learning to spell is viewed by most educators as a perceptual process. Therefore, the merit of the self-corrected test approach in which each child corrects his own spelling test while the teacher reads the correct spelling of the word may be viewed as a contributing factor

in perceptual development (Kuhn and Schroeder, 1971). It is interesting to note that two decades earlier, Gibson noted that "it seems safe to conclude that reinforcement by external correction or check is a very significant, if not an essential variable for improvement in perceptual judgments" (p. 416).

Research by Thomas Horn in 1947 established that the corrected test alone will contribute from 90 per cent to 95 per cent of the achievement resulting from the combined effort of the pronunciation exercise, corrected test and study (Horn, 1947, p. 285). He suggested that one of the reasons for the efficiency of the self-corrected test technique in learning to spell may be that it utilizes all types of imagery--visual, auditory and kinesthetic--and emphasizes visual and auditory imagery during student self-correction. A study by Hibler (1957) also suggested that having students correct their own spelling tests is an effective method of learning to spell. The results of a study by Ernest Horn (1960) indicated that 80 per cent of spelling learning results from students marking their own work right away. Because of this evidence, he suggests that tests should be regarded not only as measures of spelling achievement, but should be used as a valuable learning exercise in which the student determines his errors and the teacher assists in determining his weaknesses. Horn further emphasizes the importance of his findings by stating that when corrected by the students and the results properly utilized, the test is the most fruitful single learning activity per unit of time that has yet been developed.

The purpose of an investigation at the fourth and sixth grade levels (Kuhn and Schroeder, 1971) was to determine the effectiveness of

using both the visual and auditory sensory modes as opposed to using only the auditory mode in student self-checking of spelling tests. Since the students' scores on the words employed in the oral-visual approach was greater, the researchers recommended that all teachers responsible for spelling instruction should give serious consideration to using a combined oral-visual procedure. However, even though the oral-visual approach resulted in substantial improvement, students still showed a need for improvement in average spelling achievement, which suggests the need for continued effort on the part of teachers to emphasize student concentration during self-correction.

In summary, Christine and Hollingsworth (1966) stress that using the self-corrected test procedure provides the child with a "knowledge of the results which serve as a reinforcer that is likely to cause the child to make the correct response to the same stimulus in future spelling operations" (Christine and Hollingsworth, 1966, p. 565).

Practice No. 10. Teach students to use a specific study method in learning to spell, e.g., look, think, write, check.

Practice No. 27. Supervise self-study sessions in spelling, giving individual instruction in the study of words.

More than 40 years ago, Gates (1931) suggested that the effectiveness of any spelling program depended to a great extent upon the teacher's zealousness in supervising self-study sessions. Following comprehensive research studies with elementary students, Thomas Horn (1969) concluded that poor study habits are one of the most common causes of poor spelling achievement.

Two of the recommendations made by Campanale (1962) concerning the most efficient methods for teaching spelling were that a systematic

study method should be taught and spelling lessons should be adjusted to the individual student's rate of growth. This recommendation is reinforced by the findings of a three-year study by Eisman (1963) which indicated that grade six students receiving individualized instruction were, on the average, 0.8 to 1.5 grades higher in spelling than those receiving group instruction.

One specific study method is the look, think, write, check method. Carroll (1964) suggests that too many study methods have over-emphasized the learning of visual, printed stimuli. Hanna and Hanna (1965) agree with this notion and comment that teachers should encourage students to take full advantage of all the sensorimotor equipment they have available and bring it to bear on analysis and study of spelling words.

Indications that using multisensory experiences contributes to the development of more accurate perception of a spelling word have been mentioned previously in a study by Kuhn and Schroeder (see Practice No. 16). Another investigator (Radaker, 1963) hypothesized that elementary children who receive training in the "creation of images" would score higher in spelling achievement than would children without such training. "Image practice" consisted of having a subject scrutinize a word to note the letter sequence and then close his eyes and try to arouse an image of the word in "large, glossy, black letters on a white background." While the findings were inconclusive, the researcher felt that the imagery practice resulted in fairly uniform improvement in spelling. It was also noted that imagery can be trained in a relatively short period of time. More research is obviously needed in this area.

Clearly, however, all children will not be able to take full

advantage of multisensory experiences in learning to spell, as some children are physiologically limited in one or more of the sensory mechanisms, and all children do not learn in precisely the same way. These students need to be helped to develop strategies for learning spelling words which are based upon those sensory modes which are available to them (Hodges, 1965).

Practice No. 32. Use proof-reading of written work as an instructional device in teaching spelling, e.g., students proof-read own compositions and concentrate on studying words they misspell.

An early investigation by Tireman (1924) concluded that proof-reading was an inefficient instructional device for teaching spelling because students overlook many of the words misspelled in their writing. However, a study by Frasch (1965) indicated that grade six students could be taught to proof-read for spelling errors. Two years later, Personke and Knight (1967) reported the results of a study designed to determine the importance at the grade six level of proof-reading for spelling errors (see Practice No. 11). Evidence from the study suggested that boys who were taught techniques for proof-reading in spelling made significantly fewer errors than those who did not receive such instruction. The evidence for the girls was not conclusive. 'It would appear that there is no current conclusive evidence that proof-reading practices specifically designed to teach spelling are effective at the grade six level. On the other hand, the finding that this procedure has merit for some boys suggests the potential usefulness of this technique on an individualized basis.

VOCABULARY

The words which make up a student's vocabulary are the tools by which he lives, thinks, and learns; therefore, educators should be aware of the importance of providing opportunities for vocabulary development (Fessenden et al., 1968). Mauree Applegate (1960) prefaces a discussion of vocabulary development activities by saying: "Since words make all the difference, children should meet them in such pleasant ways that they will welcome new words as new worlds" (p. 33). The importance of vocabulary development can still be summarized today in an earlier statement by Strickland (1957): "If children are to live richly, and lay hold on their intellectual inheritance, they need vast resources in words and meanings to draw upon" (p. 238).

A review of the literature indicates that numerous vocabulary studies have investigated the relationship between the development of vocabulary and reading skills (Gates, 1962; Loban, 1963; Strickland, 1962; Wozencroft, 1964). Others have been designed to measure the size of children's speaking and writing vocabularies (Ames, 1964; Lorge and Chall, 1963; Seashore, 1948). While there appears to be a lack of research guidance on which to base these opinions and suggestions, educators stress the importance of vocabulary development and provide suggestions for methods of instruction (Applegate, 1960; Fessenden et al., 1968; Pooley, 1946; Smith, 1972).

Practice No. 7. Use multisensory kinds of activities to help students develop sensory vocabulary (taste, smell, sound, etc.).

The word "experience" is one of the most important facets of

multisensory teaching. More than 20 years ago, Watts (1947) noted that the enrichment of experience is a more effective way of increasing concentration on formal exercises in the use of words for which a need is not personally felt. DeLawter and Eash (1966) stated:

> The vocabulary of a child seems to be quite heavily related to his environment. An abundance of first hand experiences is a major factor in the use of a variety of words. Children rarely use words which have no personal relevance to their own lives. (DeLawter and Eash, 1966, p. 891)

Results of the longitudinal study by Loban (1963) with children kindergarten through grade six suggested that the use of vocabulary in writing ability is related to socioeconomic position and that providing children with more sensory experiences helps to bridge the gap between the writing vocabularies of various socioeconomic groups. Since additional learning apparently results when more than one sensory response has become part of the learning experience, multisensory activities which sensitize children to texture, shape, color, volume, pitch, odor and taste may be used to provide experiences from which children can develop meaningful vocabularies (Frazier, 1970; Spolin, 1963). Otto and Mann (1968) suggest that teachers should provide the types of activities which "unmuffle" the students' senses so that communication may develop.

Practice No. 29. Provide activities in which students use new vocabulary in specific speaking and writing situations.

Watts (1947) suggests that successful vocabulary growth is dependent on the enlargement of experience in using words. A comprehensive study of elementary children's vocabulary by Seashore (1948) indicated that children should have lots of chances to use words, as speaking and writing vocabularies are much smaller than understanding vocabularies.

In his study on thought and language, Vygotsky (1962) investigated the development of word meanings through an associative bond. He suggests that experience with words provides meanings which result in greater vocabulary for communication. Educators also emphasize the need for providing activities in which students actively use new vocabulary (Frazier, 1970; Smith, 1972).

Practice No. 18. Teach dictionary usage as a source for finding more precise vocabulary for use in expressional activities.

Practice No. 33. Teach dictionary usage as an aid to pronunciation and meaning.

Practice No. 38. Encourage your students to use the Thesaurus as an aid to building vocabulary.

After surveying the educational scene, Frinsko and Drew (1972) concluded:

> Undoubtedly, the assigning of independent research tasks to children in the elementary school has been based on the assumption that they were capable of proceeding on their own with little if any guidance or specific instruction from the teacher. (p. 76)

Although this statement may not apply to all teachers, it does emphasize the importance of providing children with experiences that will enable them to develop insights into the composite nature of research skills.

A study by Mower and Barney (1968) was designed to determine the most important dictionary skills which should be taught to students. The subjects for the study were recommended by publishing companies as leading authorities on dictionary usage. An instrument of 61 items was designed to measure the importance of teaching various dictionary skills as related to the five areas of pronunciation, location, spelling, meaning and facts concerning history and structure of the dictionary. The results

indicated that all of the skills in location, meaning and spelling were considered to be important to know. In the area of pronunciation skills, all but two items were judged as important. Of the seven skills in history and structure, only two were judged as being even slightly important. As a conclusion to their survey, Mower and Barney developed a priority scale for teaching dictionary skills.

A more recent article by Barney (1972) suggests that vocabulary is one of the strongest communication tools and that it is important to teach dictionary skills as an aid to vocabulary development.

Conscious attention to the meaning of words and to their usefulness for the expression of ideas is imperative (Smith, 1972). Often students are able to communicate generalizations but are unable to express themselves more specifically. Hunter (1968) suggests that students be encouraged to use a thesaurus to develop more vivid and expressive vocabulary. The importance of using the dictionary and thesaurus as aids in building vocabulary is currently emphasized in language arts publications (Shores and Snoddy, 1971; Barney, 1972; Funk and Triplett, 1972).

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to investigate the teaching practices in the language arts of teachers at the grade six level. Specifically, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the frequency of use by teachers at the grade six level of selected classroom language arts teaching practices?
2. Are there significant differences in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices in terms of selected teacher characteristics?

To answer the second question, four null hypotheses were investigated in this study:

H_o1: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices between male and female teachers.

H_o2: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying numbers of university courses in the language arts and related areas.

H_o3: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying years of teaching experience.

H_o4: There will be no significant difference in frequency of use of selected language arts teaching practices among teachers with

varying numbers of in-service courses in language arts.

In this chapter, a description of the subjects involved, the methods used to collect the data, the procedures followed, and the method of data analysis were presented under the following headings: Subjects, Instrument, Procedures, and Analysis of Data.

SUBJECTS

In order to survey the language arts teaching practices in grade six, a selection of the subjects was made as follows. A list was obtained of all the public elementary schools of Calgary, Alberta (Calgary School District No. 19). This list comprised 122 elementary schools with the exception of two whose grade six teachers had participated in the validation of the survey used in this study. (This validation will be described in detail in the section on the instrument which appears later in this chapter.) The Calgary School Board was unable to provide specific current information as to the actual number of teachers providing language arts instruction at the grade six level. However, a current list of teachers in each elementary school was obtained. An interpolation from this list as to the number of teachers likely to be teaching language arts was made. An appropriate number of survey instruments was mailed to the principal of each of the 120 schools on the list. A covering letter (see Appendix B) was enclosed, requesting that one copy of the instrument be distributed to each teacher on the staff who was presently teaching one or more classes of grade six (levels 13 and 14) language arts. Of the 120 schools which received the survey instrument, returns were received from 99, or 82.5 per cent. A total of 180, or 75.3 per cent, returns were received from the 239

teachers. All of these returns were usable.

INSTRUMENT

In order to investigate the teaching practices in the language arts of teachers at the grade six level, it was necessary to develop an instrument which would survey these practices. Since no commercially published or experimentally devised instrument of this nature could be found, a survey rating scale, An Analysis of Language Arts Teaching Practices at the Grade Six Level (see Appendix B), was developed by the investigator for this study.

This rating scale is an inquiry form consisting of 40 teaching practices selected as being representative of different language arts teaching practices found in grade six classes. To develop this instrument, 69 practices (see Appendix A) were drawn from an extensive study of the research and professional writings in the language arts. The practices were chosen as being generally applicable to any teaching situation, representative of the instructional areas of creativity-creative writing, functional writing, grammar and usage, handwriting, listening, speaking, spelling, and vocabulary. Items were then developed to survey each practice. No attempt was made to eliminate current practices which research evidence suggested might be inappropriate.

The 69 survey items were reviewed and critiqued by several in-service teachers and curriculum specialists, as well as graduate students and university professors whose special field is language arts. These respondents were also asked to rank the items in each instructional area as to their importance of the practice for inclusion in the final instrument. Revisions in terms of these evaluations were made and the

items ranked as most important in each area were selected for inclusion in the final 40-item survey instrument.

These 40 items were placed on the final survey instrument in random order based on a table of random numbers (Games and Klare, 1967). Respondents were asked to rank each item on a five-point rating scale. The directions to the respondents requested that each item be rated in terms of the extent to which the practice was used:

5 - Extensively

4 - Frequently

3 - Sometimes

2 - Seldom

1 - Not at all

Space was also provided for teacher comment.

An introductory section was developed which was designed to gather subject background data, introduce the instrument, and provide directions for making responses (see Appendix B). The data collected in this section included sex, university courses in language arts and related areas, in-service language arts courses, and teaching experience.

PROCEDURES

Following the analysis and subsequent revision of the survey items, copies of the final survey instrument, An Analysis of Selected Language Arts Teaching Practices in Grade Six, were sent by the investigator to the 120 public elementary schools. A covering letter accompanying the survey instruments requested that they be returned within two weeks. Prior to the end of the two-week period, the investigator personally contacted each principal of a school for which surveys had not been

received. All usable completed returns were received within the two-week time period.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Responses of teachers to the items requesting demographic data were tallied and a percentage distribution was calculated. A similar tally was made and a percentage distribution calculated with respect to the responses of teachers to each of the 40 survey items.

The nonparametric chi square test (Siegel, 1956) was used to determine the significance of the differences in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices in terms of selected personal and professional teacher characteristics. Four null hypotheses were tested in this study.

In order to test the first null hypothesis, which was concerned with frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices between male and female teachers, the total male teacher responses were calculated for the rating assigned to each of the 40 survey items. A similar calculation was made for all female teacher responses, Chi square was used to test this null hypothesis.

To determine the distribution of university courses in language arts and related areas, a tally was made and a percentage distribution was calculated. The mode was determined and those teachers with fewer than four university courses were identified as Group I. Those teachers with four or more university courses in language arts and related areas were identified as Group II. The total Group I responses were calculated for the rating assigned to each of the 40 survey items. A similar calculation was made for Group II. To test the second null hypothesis,

which was concerned with the frequency of use of selected language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying numbers of university courses in language arts and related areas, chi square was used.

Chi square was also used to test the remaining two hypotheses. Hypothesis three was concerned with differences in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying years of teaching experience. Hypothesis four was concerned with differences in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices among teachers with varying numbers of in-service courses in the language arts.

Analysis was done by means of the SPSS program run on the CDC computer at The University of Calgary.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The data presented and interpreted in this study are divided into three sections. The first section deals with the demographic data of the respondents. The second section describes the frequency of use by teachers at the grade six level of each selected language teaching practice specified on the rating scale, An Analysis of Selected Language Arts Teaching Practices in Grade Six, developed for this investigation. A summary of teacher comments is included as well. The third section reveals significant differences in use of teaching practices in terms of sex, number of university courses in language arts and related areas, years of teaching experience, and in-service courses in language arts.

THE RESPONDENTS

The 180 respondents were asked to indicate: (1) sex; (2) number of university courses in language arts and related areas of creative dramatics, English, language arts, linguistics, reading, and speech; (3) number of years of teaching experience; and (4) number of in-service courses in language arts.

Table 1 presents the number of male and female respondents. Ninety-two, or 51.1 per cent, of the teachers in the study were female. Eighty-eight, or 48.9 per cent, were male. This indicates an almost even distribution of male and female language arts respondents in grade six.

Table 1

Number of Male and Female Respondents

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Male	88	48.9
Female	92	51.1

Tables 2 to 7 present the number of specific university courses in language arts and related areas taken by the respondents.

Table 2 indicates the number of courses taken in creative dramatics. Several teaching practices in the language arts relate directly or indirectly to creative dramatics (see Practices No. 7, 8, 9, 21). However, more than three-fourths of the respondents, 141 or 78.3 per cent, had taken no courses in creative dramatics. Twenty-seven, or 15 per cent, had one course, 11, or 6.1 per cent had two courses, and one, or 0.6 per cent, had four courses in creative dramatics.

The number of university courses in English is shown in Table 3. Sixty-six, or 36.7 per cent of the respondents, had only one university course in English. Forty-three, or 23.6 per cent, had two courses; 19, or 10.6 per cent, had three; 29, or 16.1 per cent, indicated they had taken four or more courses. Twenty-three, or 12.8 per cent, had no courses in English at the university level. It should be noted that, until 1970-71, one course in English was required of all graduates of The University of Calgary.

Curriculum and instruction courses in the language arts taken in university are portrayed in Table 4. Although all respondents indicated they were language arts teachers, 81, or 45 per cent, had taken no courses in language arts curriculum at the university level. Sixty-four, or 35.6 per cent, had one course; 23, or 12.8 per cent, had two courses; and 12, or 6.7 per cent, had three or more courses.

Table 5 indicates the number of linguistics courses taken by the respondents. The majority of the teachers, 141 or 78.3 per cent, had taken no linguistics courses. Twenty-nine, or 16.1 per cent, had one course, and 8, or 5.5 per cent, had two to four courses.

Table 2

Courses in Creative Dramatics

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	141	78.3
1	27	15.0
2	11	6.1
3	0	0.0
4	1	0.6

Table 3

Courses in English

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	23	12.8
1	66	36.7
2	43	23.9
3	19	10.6
4	14	7.8
5	8	4.4
6	4	2.2
7	1	0.6
8 or more	2	1.1

Table 4

Courses in Language Arts

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	81	45.0
1	64	35.6
2	23	12.8
3	5	2.8
4	6	3.3
5	1	0.6

Table 5

Courses in Linguistics

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	141	78.3
1	29	16.1
2	4	2.2
3	2	1.1
4	4	2.2

Table 6

Courses in Reading

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	68	37.8
1	63	35.0
2	37	20.6
3	8	4.4
4	2	1.1
5	2	1.1

Table 7

Courses in Speech

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	149	82.8
1	21	11.7
2	7	3.9
3	2	1.1
5	1	0.6

Table 6 illustrates the number of curriculum and instruction courses in reading completed by the respondents. Most teachers of grade six language arts are also teachers of reading. Nevertheless, 68, or 37.8 per cent, indicated they had no university course in reading. Sixty-three, or 35.0 per cent, had one course; 37, or 20.6 per cent, had two courses; eight, or 4.4 per cent, had three courses; and four respondents, or 2.2 per cent, had four or five courses.

The number of university courses in speech is revealed in Table 7. One facet of language arts teaching is speech (see Practices No. 5, 12, 23, 26 and 37). The majority of language arts teachers, 149, or 82.8 per cent, had no university course in speech; 21, or 11.7 per cent had one course; seven, or 3.9 per cent, had two courses; and three, or 1.7 per cent, had three to five courses.

Table 8 presents a summary of the university courses in language arts and related areas taken by the respondents. Eighty-three, or 46.1 per cent, of the respondents had a total of fewer than four courses in language arts and related areas. Ninety-seven, or 53.9 per cent, had a total of four or more courses.

The respondents' years of experience are presented in Table 9. Five per cent of the respondents were first-year teachers. Fifty-two, or 28.8 per cent of the teachers, had five or less years of teaching experience. The majority, 128 or 71.2 per cent, had six or more years' experience. It is interesting to note that 27.8 per cent of this majority had 11 or more years of teaching experience.

Table 10 depicts the number of language arts in-service courses taken by the respondents. The majority of respondents, 125 or 69.4 per cent, had no language arts in-service courses. Thirty-one, or 17.2 per cent,

Table 8

Summary Distribution of University Courses in Language Arts and Related Areas

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	12	6.7
1	15	8.3
2	24	13.3
3	32	17.8
4	22	12.2
5	19	10.6
6	17	9.4
7	11	6.1
8	7	3.9
9	5	2.8
11	8	4.4
12 or more	8	4.6

Table 9

Years of Teaching Experience

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	9	5.0
2	8	4.4
3	13	7.2
4	7	3.9
5	15	8.3
6	19	10.6
7	18	10.0
8	14	7.8
9	15	8.3
10	12	6.7
11 or more	50	27.8

Table 10

Language Arts In-Service Courses

Number of Courses	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	125	69.4
1	31	17.2
2	14	7.8
3	5	2.8
4	3	1.7
5	1	0.6
6 or more	1	0.6

had one in-service course in language arts; 14, or 7.8 per cent, had two courses; and 10, or 5.7 per cent, had three or more courses.

TEACHER USE OF THE SELECTED CLASSROOM PRACTICES

The respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of use of each language arts teaching practice. Space was also provided for teacher comment. Tables 11 to 60 indicate teacher response to each of the practices. The practices are presented in the areas of creativity-creative writing, functional writing, grammar and usage, handwriting, listening, speaking, spelling, and vocabulary.

Creativity-Creative Writing

Table 11 reports teacher use of Practice No. 9 (Take your students on walks and field trips and provide opportunities for creative writing about these experiences). Although writers of professional texts and articles appear to agree on the importance of such activities as walks and field trips in motivating both expression and reception, only 14 teachers, or 7.7 per cent, indicated that they used this practice extensively or frequently. Thirty-nine, or 21.7 per cent, sometimes used this practice, and 127, or 70.5 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 12 depicts teacher use of Practice No. 14 (Use audiovisual aids to provide background experiences for use in creative writing). The majority of the respondents seemed to be aware that the use of audiovisual aids is beneficial in providing background experiences for creative writing. Seventy-five teachers, or 41.7 per cent, indicated that they used this practice extensively or frequently; 64, or 36.1 per cent, sometimes used this practice. Forty respondents, or

Table 11

Teacher Response to Practice No. 9

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	6	3.3
4 - Frequently	8	4.4
3 - Sometimes	39	21.7
2 - Seldom	76	42.2
1 - Not at all	51	28.3

Table 12

Teacher Response to Practice No. 14

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	19	10.6
4 - Frequently	56	31.1
3 - Sometimes	65	36.1
2 - Seldom	31	17.2
1 - Not at all	9	5.0

22.2 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Teacher use of Practice No. 21 (Provide opportunity for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisational activities free from adult suggestion) is reported in Table 13. Only 42 of the respondents, or 23.4 per cent, employed this practice extensively or frequently. Sixty-seven, or 37.2 per cent, used this practice sometimes, and 71, or 39.4 per cent, used it seldom or not at all. Expert professional opinion suggests that the activity is a beneficial classroom procedure.

Table 14 summarizes teacher use of Practice No. 26 (Use spontaneous forms of story-telling with your students, e.g., chain stories, tell ending of a story, etc.). Expert opinion and research seem to agree that the practice of using spontaneous forms of story-telling is a sound method of aiding the oral language development of students. Fifty-three, or 29.5 per cent, of the respondents employed this practice extensively or frequently. Seventy-eight, or 43.4 per cent, used it sometimes, and 49, or 27.2 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Teacher use of Practice No. 34 (Teach a variety of poetry forms such as haiku, cinquain, tanka, free verse, etc.) is portrayed in Table 15. Teacher use of this practice seems to indicate that, despite the strong recommendation of professionals as to the benefits of the practice, it is not frequently employed in many classrooms. Only 58, or 32.2 per cent, used this practice extensively or frequently. Fifty-five, or 30.6 per cent, used it sometimes, while 67, or 37.2 per cent, seldom or never used it.

Table 16 reveals teacher use of Practice No. 39 (Display student creative work in the classroom). The majority of the respondents seemed to be aware of the positive effect of displaying student creative work.

Table 13

Teacher Response to Practice No. 21

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	12	6.7
4 - Frequently	30	16.7
3 - Sometimes	67	37.2
2 - Seldom	44	24.4
1 - Not at all	27	15.0

Table 14.

Teacher Response to Practice No. 26

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	12	6.7
4 - Frequently	41	22.8
3 - Sometimes	78	43.3
2 - Seldom	35	19.4
1 - Not at all	14	7.8

Table 15

Teacher Response to Practice No. 34

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	20	11.1
4 - Frequently	38	21.1
3 - Sometimes	55	30.6
2 - Seldom	44	24.4
1 - Not at all	23	12.8

Table 16

Teacher Response to Practice No. 39

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	49	27.2
4 - Frequently	58	32.2
3 - Sometimes	55	30.6
2 - Seldom	14	7.8
1 - Not at all	4	2.2

One hundred and seven, or 59.4 per cent, indicated they employed this practice extensively or frequently, while another 55, or 30.6 per cent, sometimes used it. Only 18, or 10 per cent, used this practice seldom or not at all.

Table 17 summarizes the teacher use of teaching practices in the area of Creativity-Creative Writing. Of the six items in this classification, the most frequently used was Practice No. 39, with 59.4 per cent of the teachers rating it 4 or 5. The least frequently used practices appeared to involve the more experiential activities such as field trips and improvisation. Only 7.7 per cent of the teachers ranked field trips with a 4 or 5 rating, and only 23.4 per cent ranked the provision of opportunity for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisation as 4 or 5.

Teacher comments tended to suggest that administrative difficulties often influenced the extent to which field trips were undertaken. Comments also revealed some lack of awareness on the part of the respondents of such poetry forms as haiku and cinquain. The following comments are representative of those noted in this area:

Practice No. 9. Take your students on walks and field trips and provide opportunities for creative writing about these experiences.

"Practice No. 9 is very difficult to implement in our present system. Before taking a class on a walk or field trip, the teacher must send forms home for written parental consent for each child. These forms must then be all returned to the teacher before he can take his class outside the school premises."

Practice No. 14. Use audiovisual aids to provide background experiences for use in creative writing.

Table 17

Summary of Teaching Practices: Creativity-Creative Writing

	Practice	Percentage of Use				
		5	4	3	2	1
9.	Take your students on walks and field trips and provide opportunities for creative writing about these experiences.	3.3	4.4	21.7	42.2	28.3
14.	Use audiovisual aids to provide background experiences for use in creative writing.	10.6	31.1	36.1	17.2	5.0
21.	Provide opportunity for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisational activities free from adult suggestion.	6.7	16.7	37.2	24.4	15.0
26.	Use spontaneous forms of story-telling with your students, e.g., chain stories, tell ending of a story, etc.	6.7	22.8	43.3	19.4	7.8
34.	Teach a variety of poetry forms such as haiku, cinquain, tanka, free verse, etc.	11.1	21.1	30.6	24.4	12.8
39.	Display student creative work in the classroom.	27.2	32.2	30.6	7.8	2.2

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

"Audiovisual aids are very difficult to obtain when they are needed for a lesson."

One of the most interesting comments was phrased as a question, in response to Practice No. 34 (Teach a variety of poetry forms such as haiku, cinquain, tanka, free verse, etc.). The question to the investigator from the respondent was: "Are you kidding?"

Functional Writing

Table 18 depicts teacher use of Practice No. 4 (Tabulate types of student punctuation and capitalization errors from their written work and use these as a basis for teaching and review). Research evidence indicates that tabulating student errors to determine a basis for teaching and review of capitalization and punctuation is a useful practice. However, the evidence strongly suggests that supplementary methods, such as diagnostic testing, are required for effective learning. Thirty-two, or 17.8 per cent, of the respondents indicated that they employed this practice extensively or frequently; 48 teachers, or 26.7 per cent, used it sometimes, while 100, or 55.5 per cent, seldom or never employed this practice.

Teacher use of Practice No. 11 (Have your students proof-read their written work) is reported in Table 19. Evidence from research studies as to the benefits of proof-reading is inconclusive. Nevertheless, teachers are apparently in agreement that this is, in fact, a very useful practice. The vast majority, 157 or 87.2 per cent, indicated that they employed this practice extensively or frequently. Nineteen, or 10.6 per cent, indicated they sometimes used it, while only four, or 2.2 per cent seldom used it. There were no respondents who did not use this practice at all.

Table 18

Teacher Response to Practice No. 4

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	7	3.7
4 - Frequently	25	13.9
3 - Sometimes	48	26.7
2 - Seldom	15	36.1
1 - Not at all	35	19.4

Table 19

Teacher Response to Practice No. 11

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	78	43.3
4 - Frequently	79	43.9
3 - Sometimes	19	10.6
2 - Seldom	4	2.2
1 - Not at all	0	0.0

Table 20 summarizes teacher use of Practice No. 17 (Develop with your students skills in outlining), while teacher use of Practice No. 22 (Provide opportunities for your students to learn and use such research skills as footnoting) is portrayed in Table 21.

It can be noted that, although reasons for the importance of teaching functional writing skills have long been cited by educators, there is a dearth of research evidence to determine which skills are most important and which are the most beneficial methods of teaching these skills. The majority of teachers, 118 or 65.6 per cent, extensively or frequently developed the skill of outlining. In addition, 55, or 30.6 per cent, sometimes developed this skill. Seven, or 3.9 per cent, rated this practice as being used seldom or not at all.

Footnoting was not considered as important a skill to be taught as outlining. Fifty-six, or 31.1 per cent, employed this practice extensively or frequently; 62, or 34.4 per cent, sometimes; and 62, or 34.4 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 22 reveals teacher use of Practice No. 28 (Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such specific skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.). Using functional writing to provide the vehicle for skill application in such areas as outlining, punctuation, etc., is considered a most appropriate technique by professional writers in the language arts. One hundred and five, or 58.3 per cent, indicated they used this practice extensively or frequently; another 55, or 30.6 per cent, used it sometimes; only 20, or 11.1 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 23 summarizes the teacher use of teaching practices in the area of Functional Writing. In general, teachers appear to be frequently

Table 20

Teacher Response to Practice No. 17

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	32	17.8
4 - Frequently	86	47.8
3 - Sometimes	55	30.6
2 - Seldom	6	3.3
1 - Not at all	1	0.6

Table 21

Teacher Response to Practice No. 22

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	11	6.1
4 - Frequently	45	25.0
3 - Sometimes	62	34.4
2 - Seldom	31	17.2
1 - Not at all	31	17.2

Table 22

Teacher Response to Practice No. 28

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	36	20.0
4 - Frequently	69	38.3
3 - Sometimes	55	30.6
2 - Seldom	11	6.1
1 - Not at all	9	5.0

Table 23

Summary of Teaching Practices: Functional Writing

	Practice	Percentage of Use				
		5	4	3	2	1
4.	Tabulate types of student punctuation and capitalization errors from their written work and use these as a basis for teaching and review.	3.9	13.9	26.7	36.1	19.4
11.	Have your students proof-read their written work.	43.3	43.9	10.6	2.2	0.0
17.	Develop with your students skill in outlining.	17.8	47.8	30.6	3.3	0.6
22.	Provide opportunities for your students to learn and use such research skills as footnoting.	6.1	25.0	34.4	17.2	17.2
28.	Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such specific skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	20.0	38.3	30.6	6.1	5.0

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

using functional writing techniques in their classroom, with the exception of using the tabulation of student punctuation and capitalization errors from student written work as a basis for teaching and review. At least 30 per cent of the teachers used the other functional writing practices extensively or frequently. Teacher comments in this area were minimal and were generally limited to such notations as "important."

Grammar and Usage

There appears to be no research evidence to reinforce the direct teaching of formal grammar and usage.

Table 24 reveals teacher use of Practice No. 3 (After observation and practice in using appropriate parts of speech, formulate generalizations). It would appear that many teachers stress the importance of formulating grammar generalizations, as 64, or 35.5 per cent, used Practice No. 3 extensively or frequently, and 77, or 42.8 per cent, sometimes used it. Only 39, or 21.7 per cent, indicated they thought the practice of little importance as they used it seldom or not at all. It should be noted that many researchers and writers question the formulation of grammatical generalizations. However, an inductive approach to the development of generalizations is usually thought to be superior to a deductive approach.

Teacher use of Practice No. 13 (Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach) is presented in Table 25. Obviously, the majority of teachers thought that it was important to teach grammatical concepts, as 116, or 64.5 per cent, employed Practice No. 13 extensively or frequently, while 50, or 27.8 per cent, indicated they sometimes used it. Fourteen, or 7.8 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 24

Teacher Response to Practice No. 3

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	11	6.1
4 - Frequently	53	29.4
3 - Sometimes	77	42.8
2 - Seldom	29	16.1
1 - Not at all	10	5.6

Table 25

Teacher Response to Practice No. 13

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	34	18.9
4 - Frequently	82	45.6
3 - Sometimes	50	27.8
2 - Seldom	12	6.7
1 - Not at all	2	1.1

Table 26 reports teacher use of Practice No. 24 (Have your students identify the parts of speech in sets of illustrative sentences). Practice No. 24 was used by 62 teachers, or 34.4 per cent, extensively or frequently. Fifty-nine, or 32.8 per cent, used it sometimes; 59, or 32.7 per cent, seldom or not at all. The majority acceptance and use of the practice of identifying parts of speech is not in line with research findings.

Teacher use of Practice No. 36 (Without using the terminology of grammar, have your students work on sentence construction by a "thought" approach, e.g., give your students an awkward sentence such as this: "The team made the touchdown during the first half that won the game." Show them how the meaning is clarified when the sentence is reworded, and have them work on illustrative sentences) is illustrated in Table 27. Although Practice No. 36 does not appear to be supported by research evidence, indications are that the majority of teachers accept this practice. Sixty-two, or 34.4 per cent, employed it extensively or frequently; 82, or 45.6 per cent, sometimes; and 36, or 20 per cent, used this practice seldom or not at all.

Table 28 summarizes the teacher use of grammar and usage practices. Teacher use of the practices concerning the direct teaching of grammar and usage seems to suggest a lack of knowledge of the research evidence which indicates that little if any applicable learning results from the direct teaching of formal grammar and usage. While the literature does not suggest that any of these practices are particularly useful, more than 30 per cent of the teachers revealed that they used each practice either extensively or frequently. Only two of the respondents commented on these items and, in both cases, suggested that instruction should be

Table 26

Teacher Response to Practice No. 24

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	18	10.0
4 - Frequently	44	24.4
3 - Sometimes	59	32.8
2 - Seldom	42	23.3
1 - Not at all	17	9.4

Table 27

Teacher Response to Practice No. 36

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	11	6.1
4 - Frequently	51	28.3
3 - Sometimes	82	45.6
2 - Seldom	27	15.0
1 - Not at all	9	5.0

Table 28

Summary of Teaching Practices: Grammar and Usage

Practice	Percentage of Use				
	5	4	3	2	1
3. After observation and practice in using appropriate parts of speech, formulate generalizations.	6.1	29.4	42.8	16.1	5.6
13. Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach.	18.9	45.6	27.8	6.7	1.1
24. Have your students identify the parts of speech in sets of illustrative sentences.	10.0	24.4	32.8	23.3	9.4
36. Without using the terminology of grammar, have your students work on sentence construction by a "thought" approach, e.g., give your students an awkward sentence such as this: "The team made the touchdown during the first half that won the game." Show them how the meaning is clarified when the sentence is reworded, and have them work on illustrative sentences.	6.1	28.3	45.6	15.0	5.0

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

on an individual level wherever possible.

Handwriting

Table 29 summarizes teacher use of Practice No. 1 (Stress legibility as the most important single criterion in assessing handwriting). Teacher use of Practice No. 25 (Stress fluency as a major objective in handwriting) is portrayed in Table 30.

According to expert opinion and research, the major objectives of handwriting instruction should be legibility and fluency. The majority of respondents seemed to be aware of this importance. One hundred and thirty-six, or 75.6 per cent, stressed legibility as the most important criterion in assessing handwriting; 29, or 16.1 per cent, stressed it sometimes. Fifteen, or 8.3 per cent, thought it of little importance.

Seventy-four, or 41.1 per cent, of the respondents stressed fluency as a major objective. Sixty-six, or 36.7 per cent, stressed it sometimes and 40, or 22.2 per cent, stressed it seldom or not at all.

Table 31 reveals teacher use of Practice No. 15 (Teach left-handed students to slant their paper to the right to achieve the best slant in handwriting). Although teaching handwriting to the left-hander may be one of the least understood problems in education, research has indicated that it is desirable for the left-handed writer to slant his paper to the right. Nevertheless, 63, or 35 per cent, used it extensively or frequently; 30, or 16.7 per cent, used it sometimes; but 87, or 48.4 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Teacher use of Practice No. 20 (Teach students to reach a rate of speed in handwriting appropriate to grade six) is presented in Table 32. Even though there are some suggested rates for students' handwriting, most expert opinion suggests that students learn best when they progress

Table 29

Teacher Response to Practice No. 1

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	63	35.0
4 - Frequently	73	40.6
3 - Sometimes	29	16.1
2 - Seldom	11	6.1
1 - Not at all	4	2.2

Table 30

Teacher Response to Practice No. 25

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	15	8.3
4 - Frequently	59	32.8
3 - Sometimes	66	36.7
2 - Seldom	26	14.4
1 - Not at all	14	7.8

Table 31

Teacher Response to Practice No. 15

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	27	15.0
4 - Frequently	36	20.0
3 - Sometimes	30	16.7
2 - Seldom	30	16.7
1 - Not at all	57	31.7

Table 32

Teacher Response to Practice No. 20

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	10	5.6
4 - Frequently	37	20.6
3 - Sometimes	46	25.6
2 - Seldom	47	26.1
1 - Not at all	40	22.2

at their own rate of speed. A majority of teachers appear to agree, as only 47, or 26.2 per cent, used Practice No. 20 extensively or frequently. Forty-six, or 25.6 per cent, use it sometimes, while 87, or 48.3 per cent, view the practice as unimportant as they use it seldom or not at all.

Table 33 reports teacher use of Practice No. 31 (Instruct your students in the physical factors of correct posture and movement as means to improve handwriting). The factors of posture and movement in handwriting have been suggested by researchers and experts as being important. Sixty-three, or 35.0 per cent, of the respondents extensively or frequently instructed their students as to correct posture and movement. Fifty-eight, or 32.2 per cent, sometimes used this practice, and 59, or 32.8 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Teacher use of Practice No. 40 (Teach handwriting on an individual basis, giving corrective assistance) is illustrated in Table 34. Research indications are that children learn to write best when instructional procedures in handwriting are individualized and corrective assistance is given. The majority of teachers appeared to agree with this practice, as 83, or 46.1 per cent, used it extensively or frequently; 55, or 30.6 per cent, used it sometimes; and only 42, or 23.3 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 35 summarizes teacher use of handwriting teaching practices. Legibility and fluency appear to receive major emphasis as teaching practices. Speed is not considered essential by many of the respondents. Teachers indicated that they teach handwriting on an individual basis, giving corrective assistance where needed.

Comments suggested that a handwriting style is established by the time a student reaches grade six. These comments are interesting in

Table 33

Teacher Response to Practice No. 31

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	10	5.6
4 - Frequently	53	29.4
3 - Sometimes	58	32.2
2 - Seldom	37	20.6
1 - Not at all	22	12.2

Table 34

Teacher Response to Practice No. 40

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	23	12.8
4 - Frequently	60	33.3
3 - Sometimes	55	30.6
2 - Seldom	27	15.0
1 - Not at all	15	8.3

Table 35

Summary of Teaching Practices: Handwriting

	Practice	Percentage of Use				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	Stress legibility as the most important single criterion in assessing handwriting.	35.0	40.6	16.1	6.1	2.2
15.	Teach left-handed students to slant their paper to the right to achieve the best slant in handwriting.	15.0	20.0	16.7	16.7	31.7
20.	Teach students to reach a rate of speed in handwriting appropriate to grade six.	5.6	20.6	25.6	26.1	22.2
25.	Stress fluency as a major objective in handwriting.	8.3	32.8	36.7	14.4	7.8
31.	Instruct your students in the physical factors of correct posture and movement as means to improve handwriting.	5.6	29.4	32.2	20.6	12.2
40.	Teach handwriting on an individual basis, giving corrective assistance.	12.8	33.3	30.6	15.0	8.3

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

terms of the finding that 48.4 per cent of the teachers seldom or never teach left-handed students to slant their paper to the right to achieve the best slant in handwriting.

Listening

Teacher use of Practice No. 2 (Provide opportunities for meaningful listening, e.g., listening for details, sequence, critical evaluation, etc.) is illustrated in Table 36.

Table 37 depicts teacher use of Practice No. 12 (Provide opportunities for your students to listen to each other, e.g., round table discussion about personal experiences, hobbies, etc.).

Research in the area of listening has suggested that listening skills can be taught to students by providing specific listening activities. The data pertaining to the teaching of listening revealed that 103, or 57.2 per cent, extensively or frequently provided opportunities for meaningful listening; 60, or 33.3 per cent, used this practice sometimes, and 17, or 9.4 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

The majority of teachers, 104, or 57.8 per cent, extensively or frequently provided opportunities for students to listen to each other; 61, or 33.9 per cent, sometimes provided such opportunities; while only 15, or 8.3 per cent, used Practice No. 12 seldom or not at all.

Table 38 portrays Practice 19 (Use activities to make students aware of the importance of listening, e.g., keep a log of actual time spent listening in one day).

Teacher use of Practice No. 35 (Stimulate students' sense of hearing (auditory acuity) by using exercises that make students more alert to sounds, e.g., listening to familiar sounds and writing "sound"

Table 36

Teacher Response to Practice No. 2

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	20	11.1
4 - Frequently	83	46.1
3 - Sometimes	60	33.3
2 - Seldom	15	8.3
1 - Not at all	2	1.1

Table 37

Teacher Response to Practice No. 12

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	37	20.6
4 - Frequently	67	37.2
3 - Sometimes	61	33.9
2 - Seldom	11	6.1
1 - Not at all	4	2.2

Table 38

Teacher Response to Practice No. 19

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	12	6.7
4 - Frequently	17	9.4
3 - Sometimes	48	26.7
2 - Seldom	48	26.7
1 - Not at all	55	30.6

words) is revealed in Table 39.

Expert opinion suggests that students should be made aware of purposes for listening. Nineteen, or 16.1 per cent, of the respondents extensively or frequently used Practice No. 19; 48, or 26.7 per cent, used it sometimes; while 103, or 57.3 per cent, seldom or never made their students aware of the importance of listening.

The data for Practice No. 35 indicates that only 33, or 18.3 per cent, of the teachers extensively or frequently use activities to stimulate students' sense of hearing. Seventy-six, or 42.2 per cent, sometimes use Practice No. 35; and 71, or 39.4 per cent, seldom or never use the practice.

Teacher use of Practice No. 30 (Use audiovisual aids (films, filmstrips, records and tapes) as a means of teaching listening) is reported in Table 40. The use of Practice No. 30 indicates teacher awareness of the potential of audiovisual materials as a means of teaching listening. Eighty-three, or 46.1 per cent, indicated they used the practice extensively or frequently; 60, or 33.3 per cent, used it sometimes; and 37, or 20.6 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 41 summarizes teacher use of listening teaching practices. Perhaps the most interesting aspect concerning the data for the listening practices is that, although the majority of teachers provide opportunities for listening (Practices No. 2, 12, 30), they use few activities which make the students aware of the importance of listening (Practice No. 19) or stimulate the students' sense of hearing (Practice No. 35).

Teacher comments suggested that more help was needed in the actual utilization of aids as a means of teaching listening, and that greater availability of materials would be helpful.

Table 39

Teacher Response to Practice No. 35

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	4	2.2
4 - Frequently	29	16.1
3 - Sometimes	76	42.2
2 - Seldom	47	26.1
1 - Not at all	24	13.3

Table 40

Teacher Response to Practice No. 30

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	22	12.2
4 - Frequently	61	33.9
3 - Sometimes	60	33.3
2 - Seldom	23	12.8
1 - Not at all	14	7.8

Table 41

Summary of Teaching Practices: Listening

Practice	Percentage of Use				
	5	4	3	2	1
2. Provide opportunities for meaningful listening, e.g., listening for details, sequence, critical evaluation, etc.	11.1	46.1	33.3	8.3	1.1
12. Provide opportunities for your students to listen to each other, e.g., round table discussion about personal experiences, hobbies, etc.	20.6	37.2	33.9	6.1	2.2
19. Use activities to make students aware of the importance of listening, e.g., keep a log of actual time spent listening in one day.	6.7	9.4	26.7	26.7	30.6
30. Use audiovisual aids (films, filmstrips, records and tapes) as a means of teaching listening.	12.2	33.9	33.3	12.8	7.8
35. Stimulate students' sense of hearing (auditory acuity) by using exercises that make students more alert to sounds, e.g., listening to familiar sound and writing "sound" words.	2.2	16.1	42.2	26.1	13.3

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

Speaking

Teacher use of Practice No. 5 (Allow specific time periods for such spontaneous speech activities as conversation and discussion) is reported in Table 42. Expert opinion seems to evaluate spontaneous speech activities as a method of student speech improvement. The majority of teachers, 97 or 53.9 per cent, indicated they used this practice extensively or frequently; 59, or 32.8 per cent, used it sometimes; and 24, or 13.3 per cent, used the practice seldom or not at all.

Table 43 illustrates teacher use of Practice No. 8 (Use informal dramatization activities to encourage creative speaking). Forty-eight, or 26.7 per cent, of the teachers extensively or frequently employed informal dramatization activities to encourage creative speaking. Eighty, or 44.4 per cent, used this practice sometimes, and 52, or 28.9 per cent, used it seldom or not at all. Expert opinion judges Practice No. 8 as a desirable classroom procedure.

Teacher use of Practice No. 23 (Teach discussion skills and provide situations in which these skills may be utilized) is depicted in Table 44. Teacher use of this practice seems to suggest that most teachers are aware of the need for instruction in discussion skills. Seventy-eight, or 43.3 per cent, employed this practice extensively or frequently; 76, or 42.2 per cent, sometimes; and 26, or 14.4 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 45 summarizes Practice No. 37 (Have your students participate in such activities as buzz sessions and brainstorming). Teacher comment as well as teacher usage of this practice seemed to suggest a lack of understanding of the activities of buzz sessions and brainstorming. Thirty-six, or 20 per cent, employed this practice extensively or

Table 42

Teacher Response to Practice No. 5

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	33	18.3
4 - Frequently	64	35.6
3 - Sometimes	59	32.8
2 - Seldom	17	9.4
1 - Not at all	7	3.9

Table 43

Teacher Response to Practice No. 8

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	12	6.7
4 - Frequently	36	20.0
3 - Sometimes	80	44.4
2 - Seldom	37	20.6
1 - Not at all	15	8.3

Table 44

Teacher Response to Practice No. 23

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	16	8.9
4 - Frequently	22	34.4
3 - Sometimes	76	42.2
2 - Seldom	18	10.0
1 - Not at all	8	4.4

Table 45

Teacher Response to Practice No. 37

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	6	3.3
4 - Frequently	30	16.7
3 - Sometimes	59	32.8
2 - Seldom	49	27.2
1 - Not at all	36	20.0

frequently; 59, or 32.8 per cent, sometimes; and 85, or 47.2 per cent, seldom or never used it.

A summary of speaking teaching practices is reported in Table 46. Fewer than 30 per cent of the teachers extensively or frequently used dramatization activities or buzz sessions and brainstorming to teach speaking. However, reference to the use of these activities in elementary education has received considerable emphasis in the last 10 years. It is interesting to note that more than 50 per cent of the teachers either frequently or extensively allowed specific time periods for spontaneous speaking activities such as conversation and discussion. These latter activities have been suggested in the literature for many years.

Spelling

Table 47 summarizes teacher use of Practice No. 6 (Use the "Test-Study" method when teaching spelling, e.g., pretest, study words misspelled, posttest). Research has indicated that the "test-study" plan is the most efficient and satisfactory approach to teaching specific words and achieving the objectives of the spelling program. The majority of teachers seemed to be aware of the importance of this practice, as 104, or 57.8 per cent, used it extensively or frequently; 34, or 18.9 per cent, used it sometimes; and 42, or 23.4 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Teacher use of Practice No. 16 (Have your students correct their own spelling tests) is illustrated in Table 48. The benefits involved when students correct their own spelling tests seem to be acknowledged by most teachers, as 98, or 54.4 per cent, used this practice extensively or frequently; 45, or 25.0 per cent, used it sometimes; and 37, or 20.6 per cent, used it seldom or not at all. Research has indicated that this is a sound practice.

Table 46

Summary of Teaching Practices: Speaking

Practice	Percentage of Use				
	5	4	3	2	1
5. Allow specific time periods for such spontaneous speech activities as conversation and discussion.	18.3	35.6	32.8	9.4	3.9
8. Use informal dramatization activities to encourate creative speaking.	6.7	20.0	44.4	20.6	8.3
23. Teach discussion skills and provide situations in which these skills may be utilized.	8.9	34.4	42.2	10.0	4.4
37. Have your students participate in such activities as buzz sessions and brainstorming.	3.3	16.7	32.8	27.2	20.0

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

Table 47

Teacher Response to Practice No. 6

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	66	36.7
4 - Frequently	38	21.1
3 - Sometimes	34	18.9
2 - Seldom	19	10.6
1 - Not at all	23	12.8

Table 48

Teacher Response to Practice No. 16

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	44	24.4
4 - Frequently	54	30.0
3 - Sometimes	45	25.0
2 - Seldom	19	10.6
1 - Not at all	18	10.0

Table 49 portrays teacher use of Practice No. 10 (Teach students to use a specific study method in learning to spell, e.g., look, think, write, check). Teacher use of Practice No. 27 (Supervise self-study sessions in spelling, giving individual instruction in the study of words) is revealed in Table 50.

Research studies have indicated that poor study habits are one of the most common causes of poor spelling achievement, and that often the effectiveness of a spelling program depends to a great extent upon the teacher's supervision of self-study sessions. Eighty-eight, or 48.9 per cent, of the respondents extensively or frequently taught students a specific study method in learning to spell; 47, or 26.1 per cent, sometimes employed this practice; and 45, or 25 per cent, seldom or never used it.

The supervision of self-study sessions in spelling is used by 64, or 35.6 per cent, extensively or frequently; by 77, or 42.8 per cent, sometimes; and by 39, or 21.7 per cent, seldom or not at all.

Table 51 presents Practice No. 32 (Use proof-reading of written work as an instructional device in teaching spelling, e.g., students proof-read their own compositions and concentrate on studying words they misspell). Although there is no conclusive evidence which indicates that proof-reading is an effective instructional device in teaching spelling, 79, or 43.9 per cent, of the teachers used this practice extensively or frequently, and 69, or 38.3 per cent, sometimes used it. Thirty-two, or 17.8 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Table 52 summarizes the teacher use of spelling teaching practices. Teachers appear to be using appropriate practices in spelling instruction either extensively or frequently. It is interesting to note

Table 49

Teacher Response to Practice No. 10

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	28	15.6
4 - Frequently	60	33.3
3 - Sometimes	47	26.1
2 - Seldom	27	15.0
1 - Not at all	18	10.0

Table 50

Teacher Response to Practice No. 27

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	21	11.7
4 - Frequently	43	23.9
3 - Sometimes	77	42.8
2 - Seldom	30	16.7
1 - Not at all	9	5.0

Table 51

Teacher Response to Practice No. 32

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	25	13.9
4 - Frequently	54	30.0
3 - Sometimes	69	38.3
2 - Seldom	30	16.7
1 - Not at all	2	1.1

Table 52

Summary of Teaching Practices: Spelling

Practice	Percentage of Use				
	5	4	3	2	1
6. Use the "Test-Study" method when teaching spelling, e.g., pretest, study words misspelled, posttest.	36.7	21.1	18.9	10.6	12.8
10. Teach students to use a specific study method in learning to spell, e.g., look, think, write; check.	15.6	33.3	26.1	15.0	10.0
16. Have your students correct their own spelling tests.	24.4	30.0	25.0	10.6	10.0
27. Supervise self-study sessions in spelling, giving individual instruction in the study of words.	11.7	23.9	42.8	16.7	5.0
32. Use proof-reading of written work as an instructional device in teaching spelling, e.g., students proof-read their own compositions and concentrate on studying words they misspell.	13.9	30.0	38.3	16.7	1.1

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

that the results for Practice No. 32 were consistent with those for Practice No. 11, both of which are concerned with proof-reading. There is little question about the practice of proof-reading, as only 1.1 per cent of the teachers never use Practice No. 32, and 0.0 per cent of the teachers never use Practice No. 11. Teacher comments revealed strong interest in applying these practices in different ways depending on student need.

Vocabulary

Teacher use of Practice No. 7 (Use multisensory kinds of activities to help students develop sensory vocabulary (taste, smell, sound, etc.)) is reported in Table 53. Expert opinion and research agree that providing students with sensory experiences helps develop a more extensive and useful vocabulary. However, only 37, or 20.6 per cent, used this practice extensively or frequently. Sixty, or 33.3 per cent, sometimes used it, and 83, or 46.1 per cent, seldom or never employed this practice.

Table 54 illustrates Practice No. 29 (Provide activities in which students use new vocabulary in specific speaking and writing situations). The results seem to indicate that the majority of the teachers realize the importance of providing specific activities in which students can use new vocabulary. Ninety-six, or 53.3 per cent of the respondents used this practice extensively or frequently; 68, or 37.8 per cent, used it sometimes; while only 16, or 8.9 per cent, indicated they seldom or never used it.

Teacher usage of Practice No. 18 (Teach dictionary usage as a source for finding more precise vocabulary for use in expressional activities) is depicted in Table 55. Table 56 reveals Practice No. 33 (Teach dictionary usage as an aid to pronunciation and meaning). The

Table 53

Teacher Response to Practice No. 7

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	9	5.0
4 - Frequently	28	15.6
3 - Sometimes	60	33.3
2 - Seldom	60	33.3
1 - Not at all	23	12.8

Table 54

Teacher Response to Practice No. 29

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	22	12.2
4 - Frequently	74	41.1
3 - Sometimes	68	37.8
2 - Seldom	15	8.3
1 - Not at all	1	0.6

Table 55

Teacher Response to Practice No. 18

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	49	27.2
4 - Frequently	70	38.9
3 - Sometimes	46	25.6
2 - Seldom	12	6.7
1 - Not at all	3	1.7

Table 56

Teacher Response to Practice No. 33

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	60	33.3
4 - Frequently	79	43.9
3 - Sometimes	37	20.6
2 - Seldom	3	1.7
1 - Not at all	1	0.6

overwhelming use and approval of Practices No. 18 and 33 should be noted, since it indicates a widespread awareness of the expert opinion that emphasizes developing dictionary research skills. One hundred and nineteen, or 66.1 per cent, extensively or frequently taught dictionary usage as a source for finding more precise vocabulary; 46, or 25.6 per cent, sometimes employed this practice. Only 15, or 8.4 per cent, indicated they seldom or never used it.

A large proportion, 139 or 77.2 per cent, teach dictionary usage as an aid to pronunciation and meaning. Thirty-seven, or 20.6 per cent, used the practice sometimes; only 4, or 2.3 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

Teacher use of Practice No. 38 (Encourage your students to use the Thesaurus as an aid to building vocabulary) is summarized in Table 57. There does not appear to be widespread usage of the thesaurus as an aid to vocabulary building. Fifty-one, or 28.3 per cent, used it extensively or frequently; 40, or 22.2 per cent, used this practice sometimes. A large number of teachers, 89 or 49.4 per cent, used it seldom or not at all.

A summary of teacher use of vocabulary teaching practices is portrayed in Table 58. Fewer than 30 per cent of the teachers extensively or frequently used multisensory activities or the thesaurus in developing vocabulary. On the other hand, fewer than 10 per cent of the teachers seldom or never used the dictionary for instruction in vocabulary. A number of teacher comments suggested a lack of understanding of what a thesaurus is and how it could be used in instruction. These comments did not suggest any negative attitude toward the thesaurus, but rather that those who understood its use would use it if they were available.

Table 57

Teacher Response to Practice No. 38

Use of Practice	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
5 - Extensively	17	9.4
4 - Frequently	34	18.9
3 - Sometimes	40	22.2
2 - Seldom	36	20.0
1 - Not at all	53	29.4

Table 58

Summary of Teaching Practices: Vocabulary

Practice	Percentage of Use				
	5	4	3	2	1
7. Use multisensory kinds of activities to help students develop sensory vocabulary (taste, smell, sound, etc.).	5.0	15.6	33.3	33.3	12.8
18. Teach dictionary usage as a source for finding more precise vocabulary for use in expressional activities.	27.2	38.9	25.6	6.7	1.7
29. Provide activities in which students use new vocabulary in specific speaking and writing situations.	12.2	41.1	37.8	8.3	0.6
33. Teach dictionary usage as an aid to pronunciation and meaning.	33.3	43.9	20.6	1.7	0.6
38. Encourage your students to use the Thesaurus as an aid to building vocabulary.	9.4	18.9	22.2	20.0	29.4

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

This statement is representative of such comments: "We don't have any at our school."

The practices in Tables 59 and 60 represent frequency of use in the top and bottom quartiles of the responses. It should be noted that three of the practices in the top quartile are concerned with functional writing. The only one involved with creative writing is concerned with the display rather than actual student creative expression. There are no items concerned with speaking in this category, and the two vocabulary practices are concerned with dictionary usage.

The ten least used practices involve three in the area of creative writing and only one in the area of functional writing. Two are concerned with listening and one with speaking. The one handwriting item (Practice No. 20) may well be considered a questionable practice and seems appropriately placed among the ten least used practices. It is interesting to note that five of the ten practices in the bottom quartile concern multisensory learnings, as well as the development of awareness of self. These latter practices have resulted from relatively recent emphasis found in the literature.

FREQUENCY OF USE OF TEACHING PRACTICES AND SELECTED TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

In an effort to answer question two, the nonparametric chi square test was used to determine the differences in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices in terms of selected personal and professional teacher characteristics. Significant differences were reported at the .05 level of significance.

Table 59

Ten Most Used Language Arts Teaching Practices*

Rank	Area	Practice	Percentage of use
1	Functional Writing	11. Have your students proof-read their written work.	87.2
2	Vocabulary	33. Teach dictionary usage as an aid to pronunciation and meaning.	77.2
3	Handwriting	1. Stress legibility as the most important single criterion in assessing handwriting.	75.6
4	Vocabulary	18. Teach dictionary usage as a source for finding more precise vocabulary for use in expressional activities.	66.1
5	Functional Writing	17. Develop with your students skills in outlining.	65.6
6	Grammar and Usage	13. Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach.	64.5
7	Creativity-Creative Writing	39. Display student creative work in the classroom.	59.4
8	Functional Writing	28. Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such specific skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	58.3
9	Listening	12. Provide opportunities for your students to listen to each other, e.g., round table discussion about personal experiences, hobbies, etc.	57.8
10	Spelling	6. Use the "Test-Study" method when teaching spelling, e.g., pretest, study words misspelled, posttest.	57.8

*Rated: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently

Table 60

Ten Least Used Language Arts Teaching Practices*

Rank	Area	Practice	Percentage of Use
1	Creativity-Creative Writing	9. Take your students on walks and field trips and provide opportunities for creative writing about these experiences.	70.5
2	Listening	19. Use activities to make students aware of the importance of listening, e.g., keep a log of actual time spent listening in one day.	57.3
3	Functional Writing	4. Tabulate types of student punctuation and capitalization errors from their written work and use these as a basis for teaching and review.	55.5
4	Vocabulary	38. Encourage your students to use the Thesaurus as an aid to building vocabulary.	49.4
5	Handwriting	15. Teach left-handed students to slant their paper to the right to achieve the best slant in handwriting.	48.4
6	Handwriting	20. Teach students to reach a rate of speed in handwriting appropriate to grade six.	48.3
7	Speaking	37. Have your students participate in such activities as buzz sessions and brainstorming.	47.2
8	Vocabulary	7. Use multisensory kinds of activities to help students develop sensory vocabulary (taste, smell, sound, etc.).	46.1
9	Creativity-Creative Writing	21. Provide opportunity for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisational activities free from adult suggestion.	39.4

Table 60 (cont'd).

Rank	Area	Practice	Percentage of use
10	Listening	35. Stimulate students' sense of hearing (auditory acuity) by using exercises that make students more alert to sounds, e.g., listening to familiar sounds and writing "sound" words.	39.4

*Rated: 2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

Comparison by Sex of Teacher

The findings related to the testing of the first null hypothesis indicated significant differences on two survey items between teacher use of the language arts teaching practices and teacher sex. Therefore, H_o1 was rejected. The first significant survey item was stated as follows:

> Practice No. 30. Use audiovisual aids (films, filmstrips, records, and tapes) as a means of teaching listening.

Figure 1 depicts the male and female teacher use of Practice No. 30. It would appear that female teachers tend to use audiovisual aids more often than do male teachers as a means of teaching listening.

The second significant survey item related to the testing of the first null hypothesis was as follows:

> Practice No. 36. Without using the terminology of grammar, have your students work on sentence construction by a "thought" approach, e.g., give your students an awkward sentence such as this: "The team made the touchdown during the first half that won the game." Show them how the meaning is clarified when the sentence is reworded, and have them work on illustrative sentences.

Figure 2 portrays the male and female teacher use of Practice No. 36. It would appear that female teachers are more likely to use this teaching practice than male teachers.

Comparison by University Courses in Language Arts and Related Areas

The results of the study related to the testing of null hypothesis two revealed significant differences on two survey items between teacher use of language arts teaching practices and university courses in language arts and related areas. Therefore, H_o2 was rejected. The first significant item was as follows:

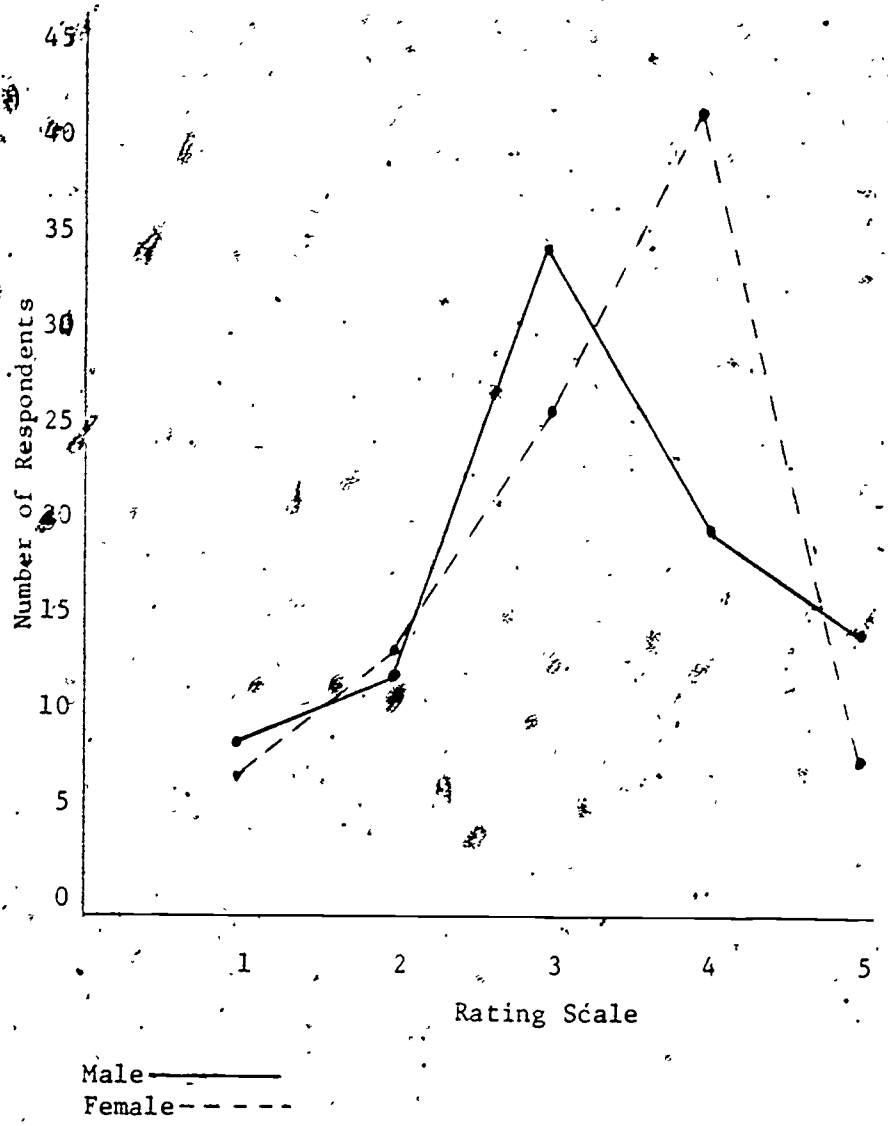


Figure 1: Male and Female Teacher Use of Practice No. 30.

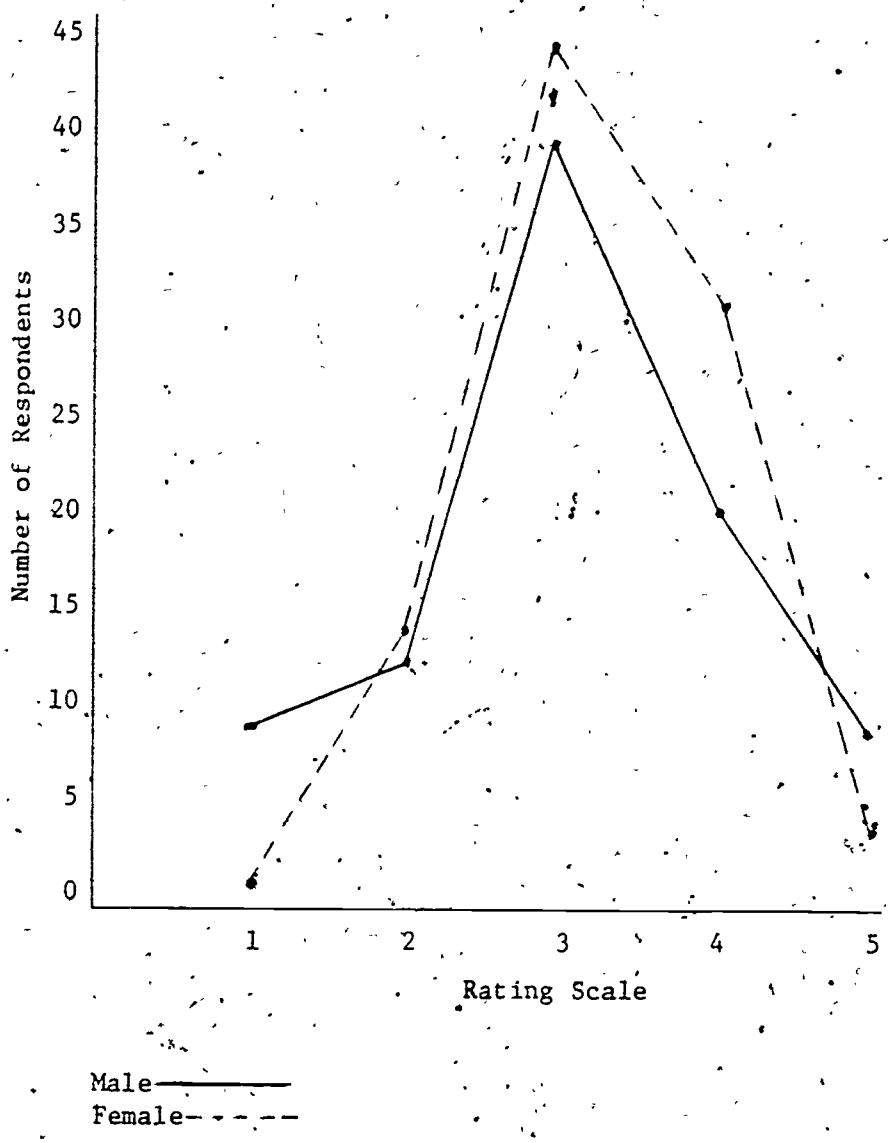


Figure 2: Male and Female Teacher Use of Practice No. 36.

Practice No. 13. Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach.

Figure 3 illustrates the teacher use of Practice No. 13 as related to the respondents' university courses in language arts and related areas. There would appear to be some tendency for those teachers with fewer than four courses to use the practice more frequently.

The second significant survey item related to the testing of the second null hypothesis was as follows:

Practice No. 23. Teach discussion skills and provide situations in which these skills may be utilized.

Figure 4 depicts the teacher use of Practice No. 23 as related to the respondents' university courses in language arts and related areas. There would appear to be some tendency for those teachers with more than four courses to use this practice more frequently.

Comparison by Teacher Experience

The findings related to the testing of the third null hypothesis indicated no significant differences between teacher use of selected language arts teaching practices and years of teaching experience. Therefore, H_o3 was accepted.

Comparison by In-Service Courses in Language Arts

The results of the study related to the testing of the fourth null hypothesis indicated a significant difference for one survey item between teacher use of selected language arts teaching practices and in-service courses in language arts. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The significant item was as follows:

Practice No. 28. Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such specific skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.

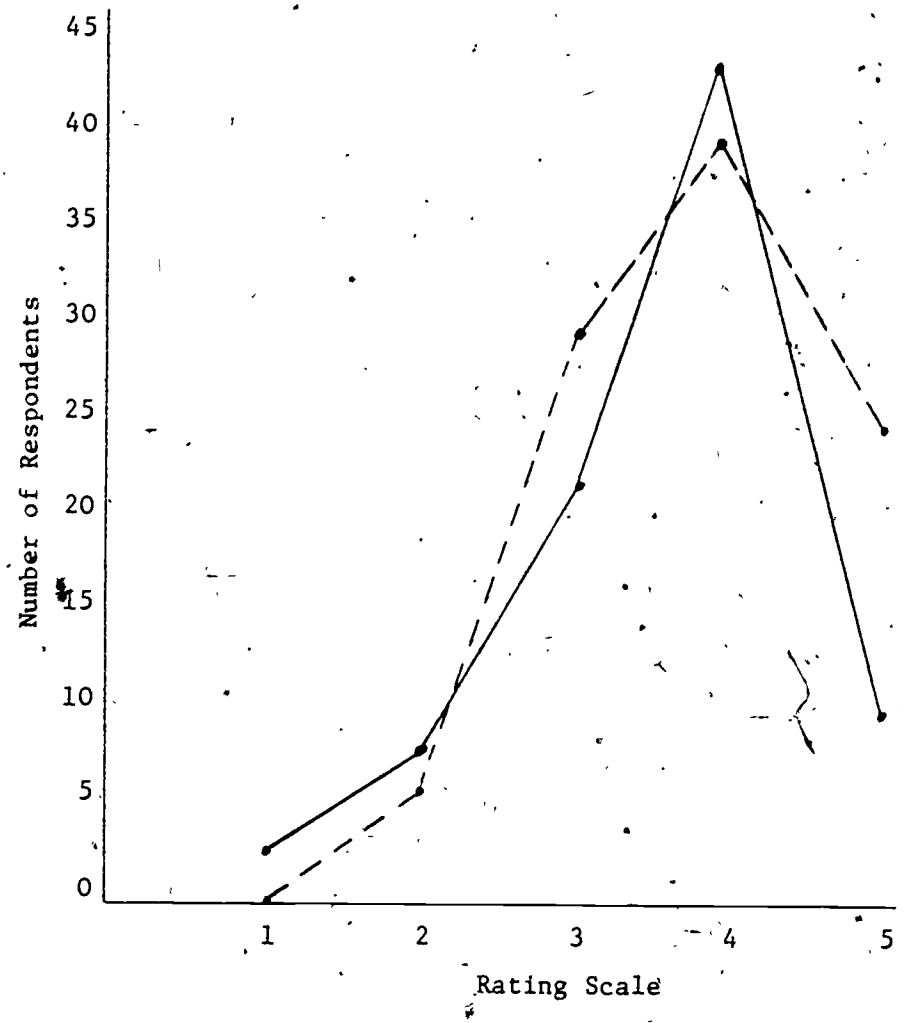
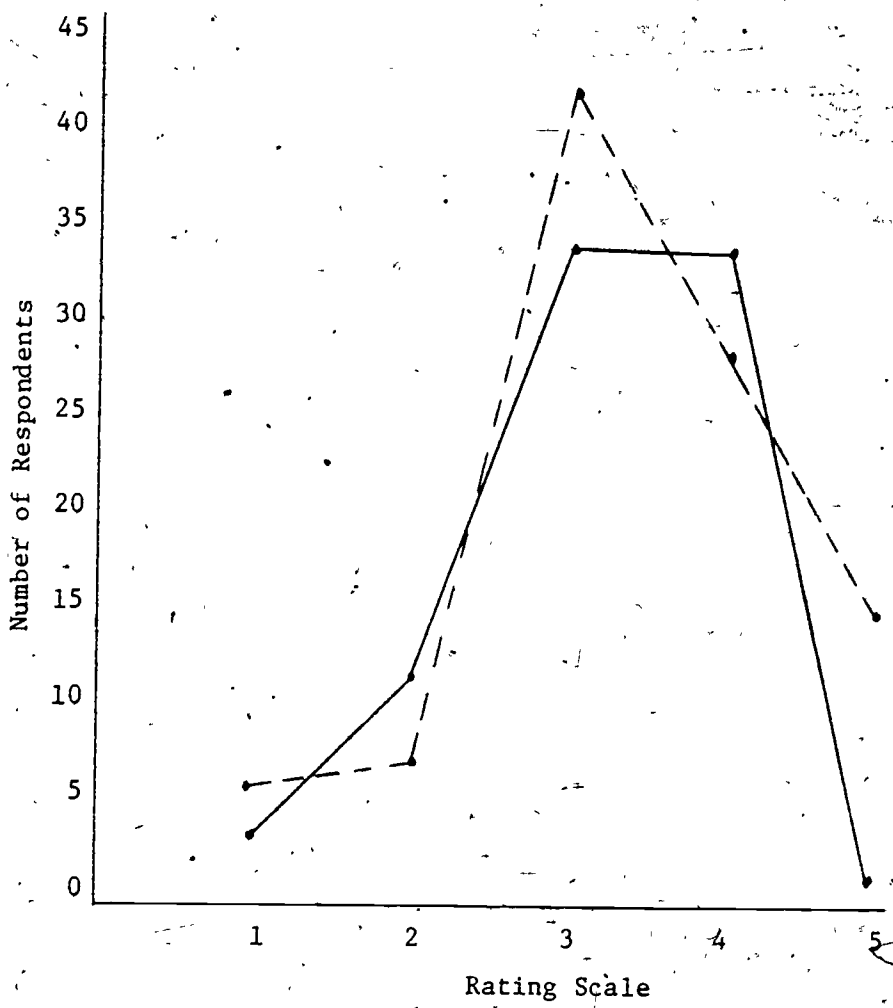


Figure 3: Teacher Use of Practice No. 13



Teachers with fewer than four courses ———
Teachers with more than four courses— — —

Figure 4: Teacher Use of Practice No. 23

Figure 5 illustrates the teacher use of Practice No. 28 as related to in-service courses in language arts. Those teachers with no in-service courses would appear to use this practice more frequently.

Table 61 is a summary of those selected classroom language arts teaching practices for which significant differences were found in terms of teacher characteristics.

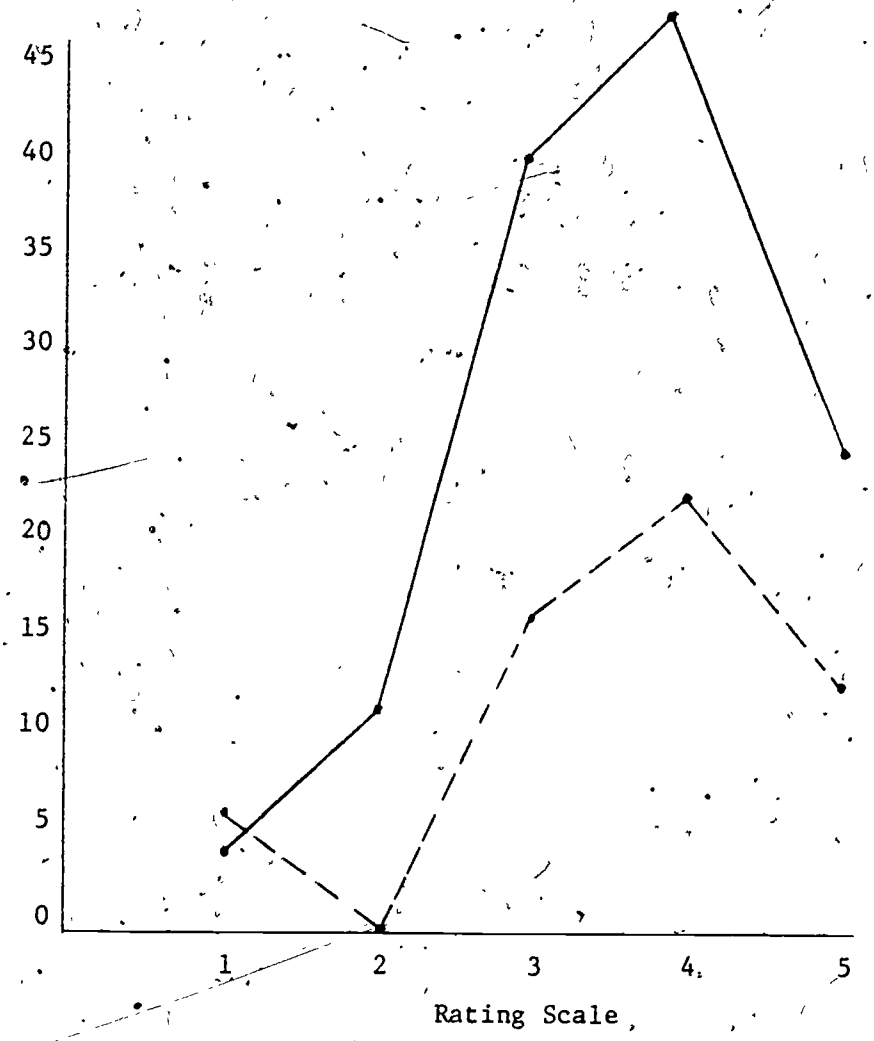


Figure 5: Teacher Use of Practice No. 28

Table 61

Items Which Yielded a Significant Difference in Terms of Selected Personal and Professional Teacher Characteristics*

	Significant Item	χ^2	Teacher Characteristic
30.	Use audiovisual aids (films, filmstrips, records and tapes) as a means of teaching listening	11.45122	Sex
36.	Without using the terminology of grammar, have your students work on sentence construction by a "thought" approach, e.g., give your students an awkward sentence such as this: "The team made the touchdown during the first half that won the game." Show them how the meaning is clarified when the sentence is reworded, and have them work on illustrative sentences.	10.23805	Sex
13.	Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach.	18.18834	University courses in language arts and related areas.
23.	Teach discussion skills and provide situations in which these skills may be utilized.	19.72233	University courses in language arts and related areas.
28.	Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	36.65365	In-service courses in language arts.

*Significant at the .05 level

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of the study was to investigate the teaching practices in the language arts of teachers at the grade six level. Specifically, the study was designed to answer the following questions: (1) What is the frequency of use by teachers at the grade six level of selected classroom language arts teaching practices? (2) Are there significant differences in frequency of use of selected classroom language arts teaching practices in terms of selected teacher characteristics?

Since no commercially published or experimentally devised instrument could be found which surveyed grade six language arts teaching practices, a survey scale, An Analysis of Selected Language Arts Teaching Practices in Grade Six, was developed by the investigator. This instrument was used to gather the data for this study.

As a result of the findings, several conclusions were reached. The most frequently-used language arts teaching practices were those traditionally validated approaches to teaching language arts described in the professional literature. While many are useful, they are generally product-oriented and tap only a limited spectrum of communication. The least-used practices tended to tap the more recently suggested process-oriented aspects of communication. The ten teaching practices used extensively or frequently by 60 to 90 per cent of the teachers were traditional in nature, while the ten least-used practices which were more recent or process-oriented only received 30 to 60 per cent

extensive or frequent teacher use.

It would also appear that many teachers did not understand the nature of communication learning, but seemed to consider language arts instruction as the teaching of specific skills. The tendency seemed to be for those teachers with fewer courses in the language arts and related areas to use the traditional approach, while those teachers with more courses were more likely to use a process approach. Since no two communication situations are identical, it would appear essential for teachers to use a process-oriented teaching approach which provides for maximum application of generalized abilities.

On the basis of the finding that very few of the items tended to discriminate, it can be concluded that most teachers who teach at least one class of language arts at the grade six level in the Calgary public school system employ the same teaching strategies, irrespective of their sex, level of professional preparation, and number of years of teaching experience. In other words, more years of teaching experience and more courses in various areas of language arts does not seem to affect teaching practices.

Although most respondents were using many practices in accord with research and professional writings, it would also appear that many of the language arts teachers surveyed in this study were not acquainted with recent research and professional writings, or with such modern conceptions of the learning process as involving instruction in the multisensory aspects of communication.

Several of the findings led to conclusions relative to the various areas of the language arts. Teachers seemed to emphasize those product-oriented skills involved in functional writing rather than those process-

oriented skills that develop as a result of creative and experiential activities. Many teachers seemed to be unaware of the importance of using teaching practices which involved multisensory interactive learnings and the development of self, both of which include practices that have developed from relatively recent emphases found in the literature. Teacher use of practices concerning the direct teaching of grammar and usage suggested a lack of knowledge of these research findings that reveal little if any applicable learning resulting from the direct teaching of formal grammar and usage. In the area of handwriting, teachers indicated that they emphasized the appropriate handwriting objective of legibility but were less concerned with those aspects of instruction that result in a fluent, comfortable writing style. Even individualized instruction was used extensively or frequently by less than 50 per cent of the teachers. In their comments, however, teachers indicated that they felt that handwriting style was established by grade six, and that instruction in this area was probably unnecessary.

Even though teachers seemed to recognize the importance of teaching listening skills and provided opportunities for student listening, they used few activities to make the student aware of the importance of listening. In the area of speaking, more than 50 per cent of the teachers extensively or frequently used speaking activities which have been suggested in the literature for many years, but less than 30 per cent extensively or frequently used such speaking activities as dramatization, buzz sessions or brainstorming, which have received greatest emphasis in the literature on speaking within the last ten years. It is interesting to note that female teachers tended to use audiovisual devices to teach listening more frequently than did male teachers.

The majority of teachers tended to use appropriate practices in teaching spelling and revealed, through their comments, that there was a strong interest in applying these practices in different ways depending on student need. In the area of vocabulary, less than 10 per cent of the teachers seldom or never used the dictionary for instruction in vocabulary; however, less than 30 per cent extensively or frequently used multisensory activities to develop vocabulary. This again revealed the more extensive use of traditional teaching practices.

In their comments, teachers suggested that the infrequent use of such teaching practices as use of the thesaurus in vocabulary development or taking students on field trips to provide experiences for creative writing were the result of the inaccessibility or inadequacy of materials or equipment to implement the activity. Teachers further suggested that, in many instances, administrative rulings rather than a negative attitude on their part precluded their using these practices.

Several implications have evolved from this study:

1. The survey instrument used in the study may be used as a device for giving both prospective teachers and established language arts instructors insights into a variety of teaching practices. It can probably be used by language arts supervisors as a means of determining the quality of classroom instruction; used in school systems as a basis for an in-service training program for language arts teachers; used in language arts methods courses to acquaint prospective teachers with research and professional writings in the field and with a variety of teaching techniques; and used as a self-appraisal device for teachers of language arts.
2. Universities which train pre-service as well as in-service teachers

need to make a concerted effort to acquaint teachers with recent research and professional writings in language arts and provide them with a stronger background in generally accepted conceptions of the learning process. Further, school boards or school administrators should provide language arts teachers with continuing in-service programs in order to keep instruction in language arts up to date.

3. Replicational studies are needed in other urban and rural areas of Alberta as well as other provinces, in order to provide language arts teachers, supervisors, and administrators, as well as the general public, with information concerning teaching practices in the language arts at various elementary grade levels.
4. Further investigation is necessary to determine the relationship between teacher competence and the use of language arts teaching practices that are supported by research evidence.
5. Additional research is required to determine conditions necessary for implementation of those language arts teaching practices which teachers consider most effective.

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APPENDIX A

SELECTED ITEMS EVALUATED FOR INCLUSION IN SURVEY INSTRUMENT

TO:

RE: Terms of reference for evaluating questionnaire items.

This questionnaire has been designed to analyze selected language arts teaching practices in grade six (levels 13-14).

The items have been developed based on criteria appearing in current language arts literature and curriculum guides at the grade six level. It is planned that the complete questionnaire will comprise 35 to 40 items.

I would appreciate your comments, particularly in terms of the following questions:

(1) Is the item appropriate to the grade six level? (If you feel it is not, would you indicate how it might be improved?)

(2) Is the wording of the item clear? (If you feel it is not, would you edit the item?)

(3) Is the item essential for the purpose outlined above? (If you feel it is not, would you indicate why?)

(4) Would you rank the items in each category in order of importance for inclusion in this questionnaire, e.g., In the category of "Grammar and Usage," there are nine items. The most important for the questionnaire should be rated 1, and the least important rated 9.

Would it be possible for you to have this completed and returned by February 4?

Thanks so much.

Dolores Golly (MacNaughton)

CREATIVITY-CREATIVE WRITING

Item No. on Revised Survey Instrument

____	1. When your students write poetry, direct them away from preoccupation with rhyming and emphasize expression of feelings and vivid imagery.
34	2. Teach a variety of poetry forms such as haiku, cinquain, tanka, free verse, etc.
39	3. Display student creative work in the classroom.
9	4. Take your students on walks and field trips and provide opportunities for creative writing about these experiences.
14	5. Use audiovisual aids to provide background experiences for use in creative writing.
21	6. Provide opportunity for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisational activities free from adult suggestion.
26	7. Use spontaneous forms of story-telling with your students, e.g., chain stories, telling/ending of a story, etc.

FUNCTIONAL WRITING

17	1. Develop with your students skills in outlining.
____	2. Develop punctuation and capitalization skills with your students.
____	3. In drill sentences or practice exercises, have your students apply the skills in punctuation and capitalization.
28	4. Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such specific skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.
4	5. Tabulate types of student punctuation and capitalization errors from their written word and use these as a basis for teaching and review.
22	6. Provide opportunities for your students to learn and use such research skills as footnoting.

Item No. on Revised Survey Instrument

____ 7. Provide opportunities for your students to learn and use a bibliographical form for listing references.

11 8. Have your students proof-read their written work.

GRAMMAR AND USAGE

____ 1. Have students diagram illustrative sentences.

____ 2. Have students memorize generalizations applicable in improving grammar usage, e.g., generalization for agreement of subject and predicate.

13 3. Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach.

____ 4. Have your low-ability students concentrate a major portion of their time on the study of grammar and usage.

36 5. Without using the terminology of grammar, have your students work on sentence construction by a "thought" approach, e.g., give your students an awkward sentence such as this: "The team made the touchdown during the first half that won the game." Show them how the meaning is clarified when the sentence is reworded, and have them work on illustrative sentences.

24 6. Have your students identify the parts of speech in sets of illustrative sentences.

____ 7. In drill sentences such as, "I am going to (lie) (lay) down," have students repeat the sentence orally using the correct form, as well as write it.

____ 8. Point out the errors in illustrative sentences and explain to your students the grammatical principles underlying these errors, e.g., "He is the one whom, I believe, will win." (Requires who, as who is the subject of the clause "who will win," while whom is the object form.)

____ 9. After observation and practice in using appropriate parts of speech, formulate generalizations.

HANDWRITING

Item No. on Revised Survey Instrument		
	1.	Discourage your students from using manuscript writing in written work.
25	2.	Stress fluency as a major objective in handwriting.
20	3.	Teach students to reach a rate of speed appropriate to grade six.
1	4.	Stress legibility as the most important single criterion in assessing handwriting.
	5.	Use the prescribed Handwriting Guide as a model to teach letter formation.
	6.	Use a Handwriting Scale to evaluate your students' handwriting.
40	7.	Teach handwriting on an individual basis, giving corrective assistance.
	8.	Teach handwriting the prescribed number of minutes per week as outlined in the Teaching Guide.
31	9.	Instruct students in the physical factors of correct posture and movement as means to improve handwriting.
15	10.	Teach left-handed students to slant their paper to the right to achieve the best slant in handwriting.

LISTENING

19	1.	Use activities to make students aware of the importance of listening, e.g., keep a log of actual time spent listening in one day.
35	2.	Stimulate students' sense of hearing (auditory acuity) by using exercises that make students more alert to sounds, e.g., listening to familiar sounds and writing "sound" words.
2	3.	Provide opportunities for meaningful listening, e.g., listening for details, sequence, critical evaluation, etc.

Item No. on Revised Survey Instrument	
12	4. Provide opportunities for your students to listen to each other, e.g., round table discussion about personal experiences, hobbies, etc.
____	5. Use a Listening Centre (tape recorder with multiple sets of earphones) to provide listening activities.
30	6. Use audiovisual aids (films, filmstrips, records and tapes) as a means of teaching listening.
	SPEAKING
____	1. Teach your students about social and geographical dialects.
5	2. Allow specific time periods for such spontaneous speech activities as conversation and discussion.
____	3. Provide instruction in such speech skills as enunciation, articulation, etc.
____	4. Provide opportunities for such formal speech activities as reporting, interviewing, etc.
____	5. Encourage your students to use the tape recorder to improve voice tone and control.
____	6. Provide opportunities for your students to participate in choral speaking.
8	7. Use informal dramatization activities to encourage creative speaking.
23	8. Teach discussion skills and provide situations in which these skills may be utilized.
37	9. Have students participate in such activities as buzz sessions and brainstorming.
	SPELLING
____	1. Have those students who misspell a word write it a prescribed number of times in succession.
10	2. Teach students to use a specific study method in learning to spell, e.g., look, think, write, check.

Item No. on Revised Survey Instrument		
6.	3.	Use the "Test-Study" method when teaching spelling.
	4.	Use a commercially published spelling workbook as the basis for teaching spelling lists.
27	5.	Supervise self-study sessions in spelling, giving individual instruction in the study of words
16	6.	Have your students correct their own spelling tests.
	7.	Organize the class into small instructional groups on the basis of achievement level in spelling.
	8.	Have your students develop generalizations as a basic step in learning to spell words.
	9.	Provide students with appropriate spelling rules to memorize as an aid in learning to spell.
	10.	In corrective spelling instruction, direct students' attention to "hard spots" in words.
	11.	Introduce new spelling words in syllabicated form, e.g., mod-er-ate.
	12.	Use the "List" method, in which spelling words are studied from a specific list and dictation is written in list form rather than in sentence form.
32	13.	Use proofreading of written work as an instructional device in teaching spelling, e.g., students proofread own compositions and concentrate on studying words they misspell.

VOCABULARY

	1.	Have your students learn the definitions of a selected number of words each week from a list you have compiled from a spelling book or some other appropriate source.
29	2.	Provide activities in which students use new vocabulary in specific speaking and writing situations.
7	3.	Use multisensory kinds of activities to help students develop sensory vocabulary (taste, smell, sound, etc.).

Item No. on Revised Survey Instrument	
38	4. Encourage your students to use the Thesaurus as an aid to building vocabulary.
33	5. Teach dictionary usage as an aid to pronunciation and meaning.
18	6. Teach dictionary usage as a source for finding more precise vocabulary for use in expressional activities.
	7. Provide activities to develop skills in word derivations.

APPENDIX B

AN ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHING PRACTICES IN GRADE SIX, RATING SCALE.

#502, 4515 Varsity Drive N. W.
Calgary 49, Alberta

March, 1972

Dear Sir:

As part of the requirements for the M.Ed. degree, I am writing a thesis on "An Analysis of Selected Language Arts Teaching Practices in Grade Six."

Permission to conduct this survey in the Elementary Schools has been received from the Calgary School Board through the University Liaison Committee.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would assist me in this study by distributing one copy of the enclosed questionnaire to each teacher on your staff who is presently teaching one or more classes of Grade Six (levels 13 and 14) Language Arts.

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the cover letter on which teachers have been requested to complete the questionnaire, fold, staple and return it to you. All questionnaires may then be returned to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelope by March 22, 1972.

Your assistance in this study is greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

Dolores E. Golly (MacNaughton)

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHING PRACTICES IN GRADE SIX

It is generally known that much of the effort and time in grade six is devoted to the teaching of language arts. The present study is ultimately intended to determine the teaching practices in the language arts of teachers at the grade six level.

SECTION ONE of the survey will provide certain information about yourself, but you are not asked to state your name. The information and responses will not be identified with individuals or individual schools.

SECTION TWO contains statements which you are asked to rate in terms of the extent to which you use this practice in your classroom.

I would appreciate it if your questionnaire could be completed, folded, stapled and returned to the principal's office by March 17, 1972. All questionnaires will be returned by mail and will be kept in strictest confidence.

Thank you kindly for your help.

Yours very sincerely,

Dolores E. Golly (MacNaughton)
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
The University of Calgary

SECTION ONE

General Information

Place a check (✓) in the space following the appropriate response in each case.

1. Sex: Male _____ Female _____

2. Age: Under 25 years _____ 26-35 years _____
36-45 years _____ Over 45 years _____

3. A. University education beyond high school:

1 year _____ 2 years _____ 3 years _____
4 years _____ more than 4 years _____

B. Degrees held:

B.Ed. _____ B.A. or B.Sc. _____ M.Ed. or M.A. _____

4. Courses:

	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 or more
Creative Dramatics									
English									
Language Arts									
Linguistics									
Reading									
Speech									

5. Number of years of teaching experience, including this year:

1 _____ 4 _____ 7 _____ 10 _____
2 _____ 5 _____ 8 _____ 11 or more _____
3 _____ 6 _____ 9 _____

6. Number of in-service courses in Language Arts:

1 _____ 4 _____
2 _____ 5 _____
3 _____ 6 or more _____

Directions for making responses:

The following items were selected as representative of different types of language arts teaching practices in grade six classrooms.

Rating Scale

A. Using the rating scale below, rate each of the following items in terms of the extent to which you use this practice in your classroom.

B. Draw a CIRCLE around one of the numbers in each group:

Rating Scale

5 - Extensively

4 - Frequently

3 - Sometimes

2 - Seldom

1 - Not at all

C. There are no right or wrong answers. Use the numbers that best represent your teaching practices.

D. Additional space is provided for comments at the end of this questionnaire.

SECTION TWO

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

5 4 3 2 1	(1) Stress legibility as the most important single criterion in assessing handwriting.
5 4 3 2 1	(2) Provide opportunities for meaningful listening, e.g., listening for details, sequence, critical evaluation, etc.
5 4 3 2 1	(3) After observation and practice in using appropriate parts of speech, formulate generalizations.
5 4 3 2 1	(4) Tabulate types of student punctuation and capitalization errors from their written work and use these as a basis for teaching and review.
5 4 3 2 1	(5) Allow specific time periods for such spontaneous speech activities as conversation and discussion.
5 4 3 2 1	(6) Use the "Test-Study" method when teaching spelling, e.g., pretest, study words misspelled, posttest.
5 4 3 2 1	(7) Use multisensory kinds of activities to help students develop sensory vocabulary (taste, smell, sound, etc.).
5 4 3 2 1	(8) Use informal dramatization activities to encourage creative speaking.
5 4 3 2 1	(9) Take your students on walks and field trips and provide opportunities for creative writing about these experiences.
5 4 3 2 1	(10) Teach students to use a specific study method in learning to spell, e.g., look, think, write, check.
5 4 3 2 1	(11) Have your students proof-read their written work.
5 4 3 2 1	(12) Provide opportunities for your students to listen to each other, e.g., round table discussion about personal experiences, hobbies, etc.
5 4 3 2 1	(13) Use students' spoken and written language to decide on which grammatical concepts to teach.

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

5 4 3 2 1 (14) Use audiovisual aids to provide background experiences for use in creative writing.

5 4 3 2 1 (15) Teach left-handed students to slant their paper to the right to achieve the best slant in handwriting.

5 4 3 2 1 (16) Have your students correct their own spelling tests.

5 4 3 2 1 (17) Develop with your students skills in outlining.

5 4 3 2 1 (18) Teach dictionary usage as a source for finding more precise vocabulary for use in expressional activities.

5 4 3 2 1 (19) Use activities to make students aware of the importance of listening, e.g., keep a log of actual time spent listening in one day.

5 4 3 2 1 (20) Teach students to reach a rate of speed in handwriting appropriate to grade six.

5 4 3 2 1 (21) Provide opportunity for spontaneous dramatic play and improvisational activities free from adult suggestion.

5 4 3 2 1 (22) Provide opportunities for your students to learn and use such research skills as footnoting.

5 4 3 2 1 (23) Teach discussion skills and provide situations in which these skills may be utilized.

5 4 3 2 1 (24) Have your students identify the parts of speech in sets of illustrative sentences.

5 4 3 2 1 (25) Stress fluency as a major objective in handwriting.

5 4 3 2 1 (26) Use spontaneous forms of story-telling with your students, e.g., chain stories, tell ending of a story, etc.

5 4 3 2 1 (27) Supervise self-study sessions in spelling, giving individual instruction in the study of words.

5 4 3 2 1 (28) Use functional writing as the most common way to apply such specific skills as outlining, punctuation, capitalization, etc.

Rating Scale: 5 - Extensively
4 - Frequently
3 - Sometimes
2 - Seldom
1 - Not at all

5 4 3 2 1 (29) Provide activities in which students use new vocabulary in specific speaking and writing situations.

5 4 3 2 1 (30) Use audiovisual aids (films, filmstrips, records, and tapes) as a means of teaching listening.

5 4 3 2 1 (31) Instruct your students in the physical factors of correct posture and movement as means to improve handwriting.

5 4 3 2 1 (32) Use proof-reading of written work as an instructional device in teaching spelling, e.g., students proof-read own compositions and concentrate on studying words they misspell.

5 4 3 2 1 (33) Teach dictionary usage as an aid to pronunciation and meaning.

5 4 3 2 1 (34) Teach a variety of poetry forms such as haiku, cinquain, tanka, free verse, etc.

5 4 3 2 1 (35) Stimulate students' sense of hearing (auditory acuity) by using exercises that make students more alert to sounds, e.g., listening to familiar sounds and writing "sound" words.

5 4 3 2 1 (36) Without using the terminology of grammar, have your students work on sentence construction by a "thought" approach, e.g., Give your students an awkward sentence such as this: "The team made the touchdown during the first half that won the game." Show them how the meaning is clarified when the sentence is reworded, and have them work on illustrative sentences.

5 4 3 2 1 (37) Have your students participate in such activities as buzz sessions and brainstorming.

5 4 3 2 1 (38) Encourage your students to use the Thesaurus as an aid to building vocabulary.

5 4 3 2 1 (39) Display student creative work in the classroom.

5 4 3 2 1 (40) Teach handwriting on an individual basis, giving corrective assistance.

COMMENTS: